RESEL EAST

THE VOICE OF THE CHANNEL

ISSUE 286 | MAY 2021

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FORGING AHEAD

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- ***** Rackspace Technology
- Milagrow Robots

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***** Women in Business

NATHAN CLEMENTS, GENERAL MANAGER AT EXCLUSIVE NETWORKS MIDDLE EAST & ALAIN PENEL, REGIONAL VP MIDDLE-EAST AND PAKISTAN AT FORTINET, EXPLAIN HOW THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COMPANIES IS HELPING BUSINESSES FAST TRACK THEIR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AGENDAS AND COMBAT CYBERSECURITY CHALLENGES.

BOS

Rapid Fire

Marketing Duo, MIDIS Group



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OVER

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Source: Ipsos

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CONIENIS



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INSIGHT

As digital technologies transform many industrial platforms, channel partners need to be ready to play the role of innovative solution providers and strategic advisors for industrial customers, says Kerry Grimes, Head of Partners, AVEVA.



EDITORIAL

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Driving the change



Anita Joseph

hange is a constant and today, more than ever, we're confronted with monumental changes to our lives and lifestyles that have dramatically altered the way we think and perform. In the middle of it all, women are making their presence like never before, particularly in the world of business. In fact, studies show that the proportion of women in senior management roles has grown significantly in the last few years and that even mid-size companies have one woman in a senior management role. So, how do the women leaders manage it all? How do they cope with change? What drives the decisions they make? In this issue of your favourite magazine, we try and find out why.

Our Feature section is dedicated to women who drive the change-they tell us what motivates them, how they handle challenges and what their vision is, for their business. We also have a special Rapid-Fire section featuring two women warriors from MIDIS Group who open up about their world. In short, this is a special, extra-pages edition celebrating all the women out there who so effortlessly manage their space-particularly the aggressive, dynamic marketplace.

That's not all. We also have a cover story where we examine how strong partnerships, like the one between Fortinet & Exclusive Networks, empower businesses to accelerate their digital transformation journey and stay relevant in a changing market. We also have exclusive and insightful interviews with Zebra Technologies, Rackspace, Milagrow Robots and Raqmiyat, to name a few, to keep us tuned to the latest technology trends and partnership paradigms. Not to mention, the regular news updates and a low-down on the latest trendsetters.

So, make sure you read every page and discover the way things and people are changing around you-from remote working to hybrid cloud, to digital transformation. Stay tuned to changes as they happen and rediscover the pleasure of reading. Enjoy!



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TOP STORIES

AVEVA AND MAIRE TECNIMONT GROUP STRATEGICALLY PARTNER TO TAKE INDUSTRIAL DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL



VEVA, a global leader in industrial software, driving digital transformation and sustainability, has signed a memorandum of understanding

(MoU) with engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor Tecnimont, a subsidiary of the Maire Tecnimont Group, a leader in the global natural resource processing industry, to create new digital predictive and prescriptive maintenance services that drive enhanced business outcomes. This partnership will extend usage of AVEVA's Asset Performance Management (APM) solutions across the Maire Tecnimont Group, globally, enhancing plant operability and lowering maintenance costs. As part of the agreement, the two companies will work together over a twelve-month period on a defined number of customer projects to promote the application of predictive maintenance technology for critical plant assets.

"Digital transformation is one of the technology drivers most needed to give our industry a much-needed boost. This MoU with AVEVA aligns seamlessly with Maire Tecnimont's strategy for digital transformation: it complements our value proposition which focuses on NextPlant, our new digital services and solutions portfolio that has been designed to fully meet customer's needs, while simultaneously improving our operational model through the creation of digital enablers," said Pierroberto Folgiero, CEO Maire Tecnimont Group.

"AVEVA's Asset Performance
Management suite is well positioned
to advance industrial operations of the
future. By enabling companies to predict
failures before they occur, we are helping
to reduce unplanned downtime as well
as drive efficiency and safety throughout
plant operations. We are excited about
the partnership and look forward to
supporting our joint customers in
overcoming today's industrial challenges
by leveraging human experience with AI,"
said Kim Custeau, Vice President, Asset
Performance Management, AVEVA.

the application of predictive maintenance Performance Management, AVE

TENABLE COMPLETES ACQUISITION OF ALSID



Amit Yoran, Chairman and CEO, Tenable

Tenable Holdings, Inc. (Tenable) , the Cyber Exposure company, announced that it has completed the acquisition of Alsid SAS (Alsid), a leader in securing Active Directory, on

April 26, 2021. The acquisition combines the complementary strengths of two cybersecurity innovators and marks an important milestone in Tenable's vision to help organisations understand and reduce cyber risk across the entire attack surface. Tenable also announced the availability of Tenable.ad, a new solution leveraging Alsid technology to secure Active Directory environments and disrupt one of the most common attack paths in both advanced persistent threats and common hacks.

Active Directory is used by 90% of Fortune 1000 organisations as their primary method for authentication and authorisation, according to Frost & Sullivan. Its ubiquity makes Active Directory a favored attack vector for bad actors who use its misconfigurations to move laterally across systems and escalate privileges.

"Active Directory is commonly targeted in attacks and is often the first thing bad actors go after when they gain access. Understanding your Active Directory security posture is a strategic and important complement to vulnerability management and is imperative to managing risk, especially in complex cloud and hybrid environments", said Amit Yoran, Chairman and CEO, Tenable. "We are delighted to welcome the Alsid team and to offer Tenable.ad to our customers so we can help them focus on security challenges that pose the greatest risk," he added.

D-LINK SECURES THREE RED DOT AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING PRODUCT DESIGN



D-Link Corporation has revealed that their DMS-106XT Multi Gigabit Unmanaged Switch, DCS-8635LH 2K QHD Pan & Zoom Outdoor Wi-Fi Camera, and DCS-8526LH Full HD Pan & Tilt Pro Wi-Fi Camera received the Red Dot Award: Product Design 2021. The DMS-106XT is D-Link's latest unmanaged switch with five 2.5G Ethernet ports for uninterrupted, efficient connectivity, as well as one 10G Ethernet port for uplink or NAS connection. Its Smart Turbo Mode delivers Quality of Service and port-based priority for simultaneous multi-media services such as gaming and 4K streaming with just one click. The DCS-8635LH is an IP65 weather-resistant camera with 2K OHD resolution and 360-degree coverage with its motorized pan feature. AI-based features such as person detection, vehicle detection, and auto-person tracking ensure precise surveillance and protection of the home. D-Link's DCS-8526LH is a surveillance camera with 360-degree views in true full HD quality and advanced features such as pan and tilt technology, edgebased person detection, auto-tracking motion, and panoramic viewing. The camera is also a 2021 Taiwan Excellence Award and 2020 iF Design Award winner.

"D-Link is honored and grateful to receive three product design awards this year from the internationally renowned Red Dot Award," expressed Mark Chen, President of D-Link. "This recognition further motivates us to continue producing products of the highest quality and innovation."

Dating back to 1955, the annual Red Dot Award: Product Design is awarded to products of out-standing design quality in roughly 50 different categories. 50 international experts judge the entries based on aesthetic appeal, function, intelligence, and innovation.

TOP STORIES

STARLINK CELEBRATES PARTNER EXCELLENCE AND LAUNCHES NEW INITIATIVES



StarLink, META's fastest growing specialized cyber and cloud VAD unveiled two key initiatives at the Annual Partner Summit 2021 held in April.

Zaidoun Arbad, COO at StarLink said that "StarLink has always been 'future-ready' at every stage in the evolution of the distribution landscape, and it is no different when it comes to our partner collaboration. Our aim is to grow stronger together, maintain continuous momentum and equip our channel community with the right tools and initiatives to progress and become profitable. It was indeed a pleasure to host our esteemed partners and we took the opportunity to felicitate 17 top partners for their outstanding contribution and support in 2020."

One of the key highlights of the event was the launch of StarLink Intelligent Automation business unit which aims to support the channel and end customers with industry specific digital solutions using cognitive automation, advanced analytics, AI, and other digital technologies powered by leading vendors in this domain. "At StarLink, we strongly believe that staying innovative is the key to being relevant and with our Intelligent Automation unit, we enter into a new era of innovation," said Nidal Othman, CEO, StarLink. "Undoubtedly, enterprises can redefine their business with AI & Automation and achieve unprecedent levels of efficiency and quality. Early adopters will be able to stay ahead of the curve and we aim to be there to support them in this endeavor."

He added that "onboarding vendors such as BMC and Blue Prism, leaders in Intelligent Service Management and Robotic Process Automation are amongst the many to follow, as we build a cohesive Intelligent Automation ecosystem. We are looking forward to expanding in this domain and building a strong foothold in the region."

emt DISTRIBUTION ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH HELPSYSTEMS

mt Distribution, a specialist
IT & IT Security product
distributor based around security,
IT Management, and analytic
solutions, has announced an enhanced
partnership with HelpSystems to
provide its data security solutions to
customers in the Middle East and Africa.

HelpSystems is a leading provider of end-to-end, data-centric security for unstructured data, on-premises, in the cloud, or in hybrid environments. "Data and information are a significant component of most organisations' competitive strategy either by the direct collection, management, and interpretation of business information or the retention of information for day-to-day business processing", said M Mobasseri, CEO of emt Distribution. "HelpSystems data security suite

enables enterprises within a wide range of industries to safely connect and automate their IT processes to protect sensitive



data as well as comply with data privacy regulations". The partnership enables emt Distribution to provide organisations throughout the region with the ability to build a strong data security strategy by adding context and identifying sensitive data with full traceability and auditing. "We are pleased to see such strong demand for our data security solutions in the MEA. We are confident emt Distribution is the right partner to enable us to meet the needs of our joint customers", said Jim Cassens, president of HelpSystems.

LENOVO INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS GROUP SIGNS BLUETECH AS DISTRIBUTOR FOR NORTH, WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA MARKET



Toni Azzi, General Manager, BlueTech Holding Ltd. (L) and Dr. Christopher Cooper, General Manager, Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions Group, Middle East & Africa (R)

BlueTech Holding Ltd., part of Midis Group and providing end-to-end technology advisory solutions for business partners across the Levant, Gulf and Africa, has expanded its relationship with Lenovo and signed a distribution agreement with the company's Infrastructure Solutions Group (ISG) for 21 countries across North, West and Central Africa. As part of the agreement, the distributor will develop and enable a partner ecosystem for Lenovo that can design, promote and deploy the company's enterprise data center, networking, hyperconverged, edge, cloud, storage and AI solutions.

Toni Azzi, General Manager at BlueTech Holding Ltd. said, "Ever since Lenovo entered the data center market in 2014 with the acquisition of IBM's x86 server business, the company has been pioneering and leading innovation in transformative data center and infrastructure technologies. Its expertise lies in being able to provide tailormade, software agnostic, end-to-end solutions in high performance computing, 5G, artificial intelligence, internet of things, edge computing, cloud, and software defined networking. Companies across the world have been using Lenovo ISG products and solutions to modernize their IT infrastructures and create competitive advantages whilst driving digital transformation within their organisations."

The new distributor partnership will expand the reach of Lenovo ISG and BlueTech into Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Ivory Coast, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia. With a view to educating the market about the latest data center trends and new solution offerings, the two companies will jointly host CIO roundtables and end-user events focusing on key verticals like banking and finance, oil & gas and education, among others.

INGRAM MICRO ANNOUNCES GLOBAL RELATIONSHIP WITH LEADING ENTERPRISE AUTOMATION SOFTWARE COMPANY UIPATH



rowing its Artificial Intelligence (AI) portfolio, Ingram Micro Inc. has announced an expanded and now global, business relationship with UiPath, a leading enterprise automation software company and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) tech innovator. RPA enables organisations in the digital transformation (DX) era to increase efficiency, workflow determinism, operation accuracy and compliance with regulations by automating repetitive and time-consuming mundane tasks.

Additionally, software robots work to establish end-to-end automation across the organisation while driving costs down. Ingram Micro's broad and specialised Advanced Solutions portfolio began offering AI and RPA solutions a few years ago and has become one of the organisation's fastest-growing global practices.

"Robotic process automation is an important component within a company's digital transformation game plan, and a great sales wedge for channel partners to introduce DX solutions and services into

their existing end user customer base," said Sabine Howest, vice president, global partner engagement and IoT, Ingram Micro Inc. "Using AI to automate repeatable, rules-driven processes is a practice companies of all sizes can benefit from and a growth opportunity we're ready to drive with UiPath through our growing and global Advanced Solutions organisation."

"We're thrilled that UiPath is offering additional support to high-value service providers like us through its new Ingram Micro program," said Bhavyesh Virani, co-CEO of WonderBotz, a UiPath partner. "Ingram Micro's global reach will help WonderBotz capture the rising demand for our custom services as well as for our prebuilt turnkey solutions for F&A professionals and healthcare, finance, banking, and hospitality leaders. The new UiPath/Ingram Micro program is an all-around win, enabling us

to spend more time on delivering industryleading client services."

"Ingram Micro and UiPath are partnerfirst organisations equally committed to continually investing in our partners to drive greater service differentiation, exceptional growth, and improved profitability," said Thomas Hansen, Chief Revenue Officer, UiPath.

"Enterprise automation is a category channel partners cannot ignore, and an investment enterprise organisations are making because of the immediate and measurable return on investment and improvement to the associate experience and the customer experience. We are thrilled to expand our successful relationship with Ingram Micro worldwide and look forward to helping channel partners capitalise on the market potential for RPA." In Q1 2021, the Forrester Wave Robotic Process Automation named UiPath "a Leader" with the highest ranking in each of three categories: Current Offering, Strategy, and Market Presence. Additionally, UiPath Vice President of Global Alliances and Partners, Cheryln Chin, and Senior Vice President of Operations and Partners, Eddie O'Brien, were recently named to the 2021 CRN Channel Chiefs list, along with eight Ingram Micro channel executives.

The entire UiPath portfolio is now available to Ingram Micro channel partners worldwide. To learn more about UiPath, contact your Ingram Micro partner manager.

D-LINK WINS TWO IF DESIGN AWARDS FOR PRODUCT DESIGN EXCELLENCE

D-Link Corporation has announced that their DCS-8635LH 2K QHD Pan & Zoom Outdoor Wi-Fi Camera and DCS-8302LH Full HD Outdoor Wi-Fi Camera were winners of this year's iF Design Award, the world-renowned design prize. D-Link's DCS-8635LH is an IP65 weather resistant camera with 360-degree field of view in 1440P 2K QHD resolution. Along with AI-based features such as person detection, vehicle detection, and auto-person

detection, the DCS-8635LH provides the high-quality surveillance to protect the home. D-Link's DCS-8302LH is also a weather resistant surveillance camera that allows users to easily monitor their home. Delivering Full HD resolution with 135 field-of-view and AI-based person detection, the DCS-8302LH is the intelligent solution for keeping the home safe.

"We are honoured to be recognised with two prestigious iF Design Awards this year



and for our smart home cameras to stand out among thousands of entries," said Mark Chen, President of D-Link. "This achievement gives us the confidence to continue creating products of outstanding design quality," he added.

NEWSMAKERS

HUAWEI CLOUD JOINS FORCES WITH BESPIN GLOBAL TO PROVIDE CLOUD AND INTELLIGENCE TO ME ENTERPRISES



Omar Akar, Managing Director and VP of Cloud and AI Business Group, Huawei Middle East

uawei, a leading global provider of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and smart devices, today announced its partnership with Bespin Global, a leading cloud technology consulting and management company. Through this partnership, HUAWEI CLOUD will provide ubiquitous cloud and intelligence to Middle East enterprises.

Bespin Global has been HUAWEI CLOUD's strategic system integration

partner globally since 2019. Under this new agreement, the companies are now extending their partnership to the Middle East, combining their capabilities to better serve the burgeoning GCC cloud market. Bespin Global's professional service delivery capabilities, coupled with their multi-cloud management platform "OpsNow", will play a strategic role in delivering the highest quality experience for Huawei Cloud's customers.

In line with the growing demand for cloud services across the region, Huawei launched its cloud service in the Middle East in 2020 to provide ubiquitous cloud and intelligence for all scenarios, which includes smart public services, smart enterprise development, and smart city governance. HUAWEI CLOUD customers in the Middle East will be able to benefit from Bespin Global's position as a world "leader" as per Gartner's 2020 Magic Quadrant for Public Cloud Infrastructure Professional and Managed Services. Combined with Bespin Global's OpsNow multi-cloud management

BESPIN GLOBAL

HELPING YOU ADOPT CLOUD.

platform, enterprises across the region can manage all of their public cloud infrastructure in one place as well as ensure agility by solving a organisational challenges quickly and easily.

Omar Akar, Managing Director and VP of Cloud and AI Business Group, Huawei Middle East, commented: "Our strategic partnership with Bespin Global will enable HUAWEI CLOUD to provide our Middle East clients with value-added services with the highest levels of performance, economic efficiency, security, support and cloud management.

"Huawei is the world's fastest-growing major cloud service provider, and with our alliance with Bespin Global, we are now better positioned to meet the growing demands of our regional customers," he added.



Mr. Nicholas Argyrides, General Manager – Guif at Mindware (L) and Mr. Demes Strouthos, General Manager at ESET Middle East (R)

Mindware, one of the leading Value-Added Distributors (VADs) in the Middle East and Africa, announced that it has signed an agreement with ESET, a global leader in information security software, to offer the entire suite of the vendor's business products to enterprises across the Middle East. This builds on the existing partnership between the two companies that extends to Saudi Arabia, which saw

MINDWARE AND ESET SIGN DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT FOR MIDDLE EAST

the distributor successfully grow ESET's business and market share in the Kingdom. Nicholas Argyrides, General Manager – Gulf at Mindware said, "Remote working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has

caused unprecedented security challenges to organisations across the Middle East. Cyber criminals are exploiting the fact that companies are still scrambling to put the right security technologies and procedures in place. There has been a surge in cybercrime since the start of the pandemic with countries like the UAE for example witnessing a 250% increase in cyberattacks in 2020. Unfortunately, this trend

is unlikely to subside this year."

"ESET with its wide array of world-class solutions including end-point security and multi-factor authentication, has been helping organisations across the globe with their data protection requirements as part of their digital transformation initiatives. This partnership signing strengthens our security portfolio. We are excited to offer our channel partners and their customers ESET's award-winning security solutions that ensure protection of company endpoints, business data and users." Mindware will focus on the entire suite of ESET business products, with emphasis on increasing regional adoption of the company's end-point detection and response solutions and other key technologies like cloud sandboxing and threat intelligence. The distributor will help the security vendor penetrate deeper across all industry verticals.

NEWSMAKERS



StarLink, the fastest growing 'True' Value-added Distributor (VAD) in the META region, has announced a collaboration with BMC Software, Inc., a global leader in software solutions for the Autonomous Digital Enterprise, as a BMC Distribution Partner for BMC IT software solutions and services in the MENA region.

Together, both companies have agreed to embark on this expansion journey by capitalising on StarLink's strengths and expertise - its extensive channel network, a robust customer installedbase across multiple business verticals, mainly Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI), government, oil and gas, telecom, and the highly skilled onthe-ground sales and technical teams.

STARLINK COLLABORATES WITH BMC

StarLink undertakes to promote and distribute the entire BMC IT software and services solutions portfolio.

BMC aims to become the key strategic partner to customers to help them reinvent and power their businesses through software to become Autonomous Digital Enterprises (ADEs).

Nidal Othman, CEO, StarLink said, "It's high time businesses accelerate their digital transformation journey in its true sense for operational excellence and to remain competitive. With BMC's unmatched experience in IT Management, we are bringing in a robust range of AI-powered onprem, cloud and hybrid IT solutions to enable enterprises to become agile and efficient with their service management, automation, and operations," he added.

CISCO ANNOUNCES NEW DATA CENTRE TO SERVE COLLABORATION CUSTOMERS



Reem Asaad, Vice President, Cisco MEA

Cisco announced that it is bringing a new data centre to Frankfurt, Germany, to serve customers using its Collaboration platform Webex in the European Union (EU) and the Europe, Middle East, Africa and Russia (EMEAR) region. The new data centre in Frankfurt is scheduled for operation by end of June 2021.

Over the past months, public and private actors from all sectors expanded telework to provide vital citizen and business services.

The rapid digital transformation that occurred with the shift to remote working, combined with the need to keep distributed teams connected have increased the demand for cloud-based Collaboration platforms. Since the

beginning of the pandemic, the use of digital collaboration tools, such as Cisco Webex, has increased by 74%. Webex alone has grown to nearly 600 million participants quarterly on average.

"There is no doubt: the future of work will be hybrid. Collaboration technologies play a key role in enabling digital workers, regardless of geography, language or proficiency in technology. The velocity of innovation in this area is staggering. At Cisco, we have launched over 400 new enhancements for Webex since September 2020, underpinned by the security and privacy principles that are core to our technologies and processes", said Reem Asaad, Vice President, Cisco Middle East and Africa.

Webex has a rich history of helping employees innovate and remain productive wherever they are, by providing various digital solutions. The platform has also been integral for governments to continue to lead remotely, doctors to meet with patients safely, and educators to teach students at a distance enabling connected classrooms.

ABU DHABI'S MIRAL EMBARKS ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION **JOURNEY WITH** ORACLE FUSION CLOUD APPLICATIONS



Miral, Abu Dhabi's leading curator of experiences, has selected Oracle Fusion Cloud Applications Suite to automate its core business processes, including finance and human resources. Miral is a leading developer of award-winning entertainment and leisure destinations and attractions, including Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld and Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi.

"We are focused on initiating transformative solutions that elevate our business as well as our customers' experiences. With a growing portfolio of developments, it is important for us to have real-time insights across all core operations. Oracle Fusion Applications will help us automate business processes and increase efficiency on a secure, comprehensive platform, hence contributing to Abu Dhabi's development as a sustainable and diversified economy," said Ali Nimer, Executive Director of Digital and Technology at Miral.

Miral will implement Oracle Fusion Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Oracle Fusion Cloud Enterprise Performance Management (EPM), and Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM). The initiative will help Miral reduce costs, sharpen forecasts, enhance employee experience, and improve decision-making across the business. "The ability of an organisation to consistently innovate is key to outpace services and solutions offered by competitors and achieve long-term success. Miral is playing a vital role in the economic diversification of Abu Dhabi, and with its continuous product updates and pervasive machine learning capabilities, Oracle Fusion Applications will help Miral stay ahead of a rapidly-evolving economic environment and customer expectation," said Rahul Misra, VP, Business Applications, Lower Gulf, Oracle.





Smart



MU-MIMO Technology



Smart Steering



Simple Setup



Profile-based Parental Controls



Expandable Network



WPA3™ Encryption



Works with your existing router or gateway











ZEBRA TECHNOLOGIES INTRODUCES NEW ALLIANCE TRACK FOR PARTNERCONNECT CHANNEL PROGRAM



ebra Technologies Corporation, an innovator at the front line of business with solutions and partners that deliver a performance edge, today announced the new PartnerConnect Alliance Track recognizing expertise and influence while enabling greater collaboration with complementary, non-reselling partners.

Zebra's Alliance Track, which runs alongside the Independent Software Vendor (ISV) track within the complementary partners category, is a strategic component of the award-winning PartnerConnect program. The new Alliance Track acknowledges the global influence of independent hardware vendors (IHVs), system integrators (SIs), consultants, and technology alliance partners. The combination of the growing complexity of enterprise and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions with evolving Software as a Service (SaaS) and Device as a Service (DaaS) business models has placed greater emphasis on partners influencing the components of the total solution.

"At CarComm, we place great value on our collaboration with Zebra and welcome the addition of the new Alliance Track," said Bas Guerts, Sales and Marketing Manager, CarComm, a Zebra Registered Independent Software Vendor (ISV) partner. "Benefits like early access to Zebra 3D drawings and other product specifications will allow us to develop accessories more quickly and collaborate more closely with other PartnerConnect partners."

A wide variety of benefits will be available to Alliance Track members, including demo kits, marketing development funds and, specifically for IHVs, the opportunity for their hardware products to achieve Zebra Compatible or Zebra Validated accreditation.

"Zebra's new Alliance Track recognizes the value and contribution our partners play in meeting the needs of our mutual customers - from consulting and modelling to designing enterprise solutions that give a performance edge to the front line of business," said Bill Cate, Vice President of Global Channel Strategy, Zebra Technologies. "With the new Alliance Track, we can better enable and facilitate collaboration between Zebra, our community of resellers and ISVs along with the wider ecosystem of complementary partners."

The PartnerConnect Alliance Track is comprised of three tiers – Registered, Select and Premier. Progression within the program depends on the partner's influence pipeline captured through Zebra's existing "Influence Registration" process used successfully today by hundreds of ISV partners. The new Premier Alliance Partner tier will be reserved exclusively for Zebra's global strategic alliances, with stringent requirements that demonstrate global scale and reach.

.....

INFOVISTA ACQUIRES EMPIRIX

Infovista, the global leader in network lifecycle automation, has announced that it has completed the acquisition of Empirix, a Thoma Bravo portfolio company. The combined company becomes the only independent software vendor providing both Communications Service Providers (CSPs) and Enterprises with a carrier-grade, cloud-native network lifecycle automation platform designed for the 5G era.

Empirix is a leader in network and service testing, performance monitoring, assurance and analytics.

It serves Tier 1 CSPs and large Contact Centres of Fortune Global 500 companies. It is headquartered in Billerica, Massachusetts, and employs approximately 300 people worldwide.

With this acquisition, Infovista extends its ability to serve CSPs globally and expands the capabilities of its cloud-native, open platform which manages the entire network lifecycle. This enables the digital transformation of CSPs and the acceleration of 5G deployments while delivering unprecedented efficiency and productivity levels in managing both 5G and legacy networks.

It also enables CSPs to deploy new revenue generating services from digital services, IoT, network slicing and monetisation of data and network assets.

"The union of Infovista and Empirix gives all our clients a unique opportunity to reap the benefits of 5G, IoT and private networks, and to move fast towards a software-based and cloud-native future. By bringing network lifecycle automation to a strategic level, we provide CSPs with new ways to improve their productivity, customer experience and time-to-market", commented José Duarte, CEO of Infovista. "With this acquisition, we also increase our presence in North America and Europe to expand our global footprint and strengthen our ability to help clients accelerate their network and business transformation".

By joining forces with Empirix, Infovista

integrates KLERITY into its product portfolio. Empirix has invested heavily since 2017 to develop KLERITY and designed it from the ground up to be the first best-in-class cloud-native monitoring, assurance and analytics solution for 5G and IoT. KLERITY enriches Infovista's capabilities throughout the entire network lifecycle by adding end-to-end and highly granular visibility, analytics and troubleshooting capabilities across subscribers, devices, applications, services and networks.

"Telco CTOs today face a complex technology landscape with a large number of vendors. They are looking to support innovation and increase efficiency of operations through automation", noted James Crawshaw, Principal Analyst at Omdia. "Empirix's cloud-native assurance and analytics solutions should round out Infovista's existing portfolio of solutions that span the network lifecycle. Better network visibility and increased automation are key to supporting the business goals of CSPs in the 5G era," he added.

HELPING PARTNERS GROW

Reseller Middle East Editor Anita Joseph caught up with Lars Schmermbeck, Senior Director, Channel Sales EMEA, Zebra Technologies, to learn more about their channel partner program and how they help partners grow and differentiate their service offerings in a changing market.



ell us more about Zebra Technologies' channel partner program. What are the highlights?
Zebra's channel engagement and collaboration is one that is part of a larger partner ecosystem comprising multiple partner communities with different business models that allows us to reach our customers.

Zebra's PartnerConnect program is

focused on opportunity, profitability and simplicity for channel partners and has been designed to accomplish three strategic goals:

- Encourage and enable sales across the entire product and services portfolio
- Reward and support partners differently based on their business model and growth strategy
- Develop new, profitable revenue streams around intelligent edge solutions

As in all ecosystems, the key to harmony is balance: our partners believe in Zebra's offerings, invest themselves in sales and receive a competitive return on their investments. Our channel partner relationships are ultimately about meeting customers' needs and providing them with the added value they seek.

What does it mean to be a channel partner with Zebra Technologies? How can partners grow and differentiate their product service offerings in the new normal? Zebra's PartnerConnect channel program is constantly evolving. The creation of new tracks varies to adapt its program to the regional needs and market maturity. For example, two partner program specialisations in RFID and healthcare were developed by Zebra in 2020, giving opportunities to our partners to differentiate themselves. Zebra works in close collaboration with distributors at regional and local level.

Our Independent Software Vendor (ISV) community has an important role to play in Zebra's partner ecosystem and through Zebra's developer portal, ISVs can access software development tools and resources.

By joining forces, vendors and partners can achieve far more than they can separately. In today's connected world, collaboration that reaches across continents, languages and cultures is both possible and expected. A global audience demands a global network of partners capable of delivering the right solutions. Collaboration fuels mutually beneficial growth.

Within the context of a channel ecosystem, the global health crisis has underscored how important it is for resellers, distributors, integrated software vendors and other solution partners to align themselves with manufacturers that are agile, adaptable and collaborative.

Around 80% of all Zebra's business has consistently come from its partners. What's behind Zebra's channel success?

Zebra's channel strategy is to help our partners grow profitably by developing, enabling and rewarding partners that invest in their Zebra relationship and providing a level playing field to do this. It is based on a channel first, go-to-market approach. Approximately 80% of Zebra's global revenue is driven through the channel. Zebra and our partners rely on each other to deliver solutions that meet customers' needs. Without our partners, there is no Zebra success.

Zebra's 2020 earnings reported \$4,448 billion net sales and its biggest quarter from a sales, revenue and channel perspective. This would not have been achievable without the collaboration of our active and certified partners around the globe. With a faster-than-expected recovery from smaller customers, Zebra has seen strong demand in its distribution channel.

Give us more insights into the new alliance track that Zebra is adding to its specialized list of channels. What does this mean for Zebra's growth? Zebra's new PartnerConnect Alliance Track recognizes expertise and influence while enabling greater collaboration with complementary, non-reselling partners. It runs alongside the Independent Software Vendor (ISV) track within the complementary partners category, is a strategic component of the award-winning PartnerConnect program. The new Alliance Track acknowledges the global influence of independent hardware vendors (IHVs), system integrators (SIs), consultants, and technology alliance partners. The combination of the growing complexity of enterprise and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions with evolving Software as a Service (SaaS) and Device as a Service (DaaS) business models has placed greater emphasis on partners influencing the

ZEBRA'S CHANNEL
STRATEGY IS TO
HELP OUR PARTNERS
GROW PROFITABLY BY
DEVELOPING, ENABLING
AND REWARDING
PARTNERS THAT
INVEST IN THEIR ZEBRA
RELATIONSHIP AND
PROVIDING A LEVEL

components of the total solution.

PLAYING FIELD TO DO THIS."

A wide variety of benefits will be available to Alliance Track members, including demo kits, marketing development funds and, specifically for IHVs, the opportunity for their hardware products to achieve Zebra Compatible or Zebra Validated accreditation.

It is comprised of three tiers – Registered, Select and Premier. Progression within the program depends on the partner's influence pipeline captured through Zebra's existing "Influence Registration" process used successfully today by hundreds of ISV partners. The new Premier Alliance Partner tier will be reserved exclusively for Zebra's global strategic alliances, with stringent requirements that demonstrate global scale and reach.

Zebra's new Alliance Track recognises the value and contribution our partners play in meeting the needs of our mutual customers - from consulting and modelling to designing enterprise solutions that give a performance edge to the front line of business. The new Alliance Track can better enable and facilitate collaboration between Zebra, our community of resellers and ISVs along with the wider ecosystem of complementary partners.

What are the various technology trends in the market today, that partners can capitalise on?

The top three technologies that will influence or disrupt our industry in 2021 are computer and machine vision, intelligent automation including robotics and artificial intelligence, and prescriptive analytics.

All three of these technology areas relate and depend on one another to realize value. Companies can visualize their operations better through both real-time data (e.g., computer vision) as well as source system data (e.g., ERP systems). They can turn that enhanced visibility into intelligence to drive automated decisions to the front line, enabling them to take better actions resulting from the combined value of these technologies.

The pandemic has accelerated secular trends that were already under way, including e-commerce, automation and supply chain optimisation. Some example use-cases include "buy online pick-up in-store" (BOPIS), ship from store and micro-fulfillment. Zebra's ability to address these opportunities has been enabled by advancements in technology including the Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing and dynamic intelligent planning.

Enterprises have increased their spend on intelligent automation, including robotics and artificial intelligence (AI) in conjunction with machine learning (ML) and prescriptive analytics solutions. Enterprises who want to empower their front-line workers with insights that drive real-time actions will need to prioritize these technologies this year.

The acceleration in retail automation – spanning the entire supply chain from the store to warehousing operations and distribution centers – has been driven by the demand for delivering directly to consumers and doing so in an increasingly ondemand way which has left parcel carriers operating at peak volumes during what would traditionally be non-peak times. This creates a critical need to automate workflows to satisfy customer demand while also driving efficiency and productivity.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS ALL ABOUT TRUST

By: Edwin Weijdema, Global Technologist, Product Strategy, Veeam

s we become more reliant on technology to work, communicate, and be entertained, we are having to place our trust in it more han ever before. When I choose to work from home instead of travelling to the office, I am trusting that my laptop is fully operational, my Internet connection is stable, and that my ability to access the cloud-based applications I need for my work are available. Subconsciously, however, it is natural to worry more about your devices and connectivity breaking down when working from home than it is when you are in the office, with the IT team sat in the same building.

This is because putting our faith in technology often requires putting confidence in the unknown. Ultimately, this is what trust is all about. Am I confident enough in someone or something that I can overcome the uncertainty of the outcome? If you do not trust, you will not take risks or take a step into the unknown, which means you will never change. So, as organisations continue with their Digital Transformation (DX) journeys, how can they ensure that a lack of trust towards technology does not prevent them from taking the necessary risks that come with any attempt to initiate change?

In some ways, the process of trusting a piece of technology is very similar to trusting another human. We have a number of mechanisms to draw on. The first is our gut instinct. You often know whether or not you find someone trustworthy within 30 seconds of meeting them. This is also true of technology. Everything from the brand logo to our first interaction with the user interface adds to our perception of whether or not a device, website or communication is trustworthy or not. Various studies

suggest that we are more likely to accept phone calls from numbers we recognise. We become suspicious about providing personal information about ourselves when registering for services online, when we would have no hesitation giving the same details to a bank clerk or mortgage advisor.

However, trust is not all about our gut reaction. Trust is earned over time through our own experiences, but also through other peoples'. When you can read up on experiences shared by those other people, who you never have met, you can reduce your uncertainty and posed risk. This way you can take a confident step towards the unknown. This can be referred to as distributed trust. We are more likely to trust a professional decorator with a job in our home if he/she has a high rating and visible track record online where maybe even examples of their work are displayed. This is an example of distributed trust, and the same concept also applies to technology. Technology assists us with reducing the uncertainty by giving access to a huge pile of information. This information is what you can call a trust enabler.

The majority of technology users and IT teams prefer to wait and see. Whether it's buying a new smartphone or migrating data to the public cloud, many of us seek endorsement from people who have tried it first – including our peers, other businesses, independent consultants, and total strangers on the other side of the world. There's a reason the IT industry has a saying that no one gets fired for hiring certain brands. Those brands have built a visible track record through being reliable, consistent, and delivering a great customer experience.

One of the major trust issues organisations have regarding new technology is whether or not it is secure. Will their data be safe and protected?

They also want to know what happens when things go wrong. What happens if the technology fails? How do we get our services back online and quickly recover our data? So, with DX on the agenda of every business boardroom, CIOs and IT teams need to feel reassured that the technology providers they put their trust in are fit for purpose. According to the Veeam Data Protection Report 2021, over a quarter of business leaders in the Middle East (26% in UAE and 27% in Saudi Arabia) see cyber threats as a challenge to their DX initiatives in the next 12 months.

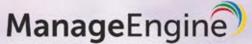
Furthermore, organisations are starting to understand that one of the most sure-fire ways for a business to lose trust is for their data to be compromised – whether it is stolen or simply lost. Our research indicates that 50% of business leaders in UAE and 45% in Saudi Arabia think downtime and data loss could negatively impact customer confidence. 40% of respondents in both countries fear damage to brand integrity. Over a third (34%) of UAE organisations think this could result in a loss of employee confidence and 35% of Saudi Arabian enterprises think this could result in reduced stock price. All this shows the inextricable link between data protection and trust.

In terms of how successfully organisations in the Middle East are currently protecting data, 27% of all backup jobs and 24% of all restore jobs fail leaving 45% of data potentially unprotected. The issues of data protection and cybersecurity, therefore, pose a threat to DX. It is clear that humans' relationship with technology, whether they are a customer, a business decision maker, or an employee, is all about trust. So, businesses must turn to trusted technology advisors who can help them ensure that their DX is built on solid foundations, with a data protection that is fit for purpose.

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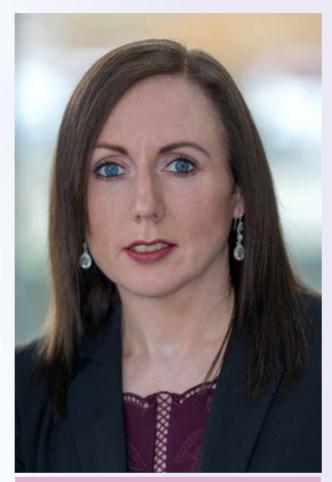
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WOMEN-LED

Women are increasingly becoming the driving force in business. In fact, their unique leadership style and technical know-how are bringing about unprecedented growth and results in an increasingly volatile and evolving market. So, how do the women leaders do it all? What motivates them and how do they deal with the impossible? We speak to some of the who's-who in the technology world, to find out.





ANDREA CARTERRegional Director, Marketing NEMEA, Sophos

What do you love about your job? What inspires you?

I was lucky enough to almost fall into IT, gaining my first role within a sales automation software company. I very quickly realized that I had a passion for technology and have spent my entire working career of nearly 20 years since in the B2B technology sector. I think the reason I have remained in the technology sector and love it so much is the constant rate of innovation which keeps my role interesting and exciting. In my current position I look after the strategy and execution of both direct and channel marketing across North & South EMEA as well as EMEA Emerging Markets. I predominately see my core responsibilities as raising awareness, generating demand and supporting the enablement of our fantastic channel of distributors and resellers. For the last nine years, I have been working in cybersecurity at Sophos, and couldn't ask for a more interesting and rewarding role.

What is your business goal for the channel and how are you approaching this goal?

Sophos is a channel centric company and we aim to achieve our goal - to protect businesses of all sizes from cybercrime by providing innovative next generation cybersecurity solutions and services- through our channel partners only. We want to grow in the region through the growth of our channel partners.

Sophos employs a simple and effective "Channel First" sales strategy that allows us to efficiently scale our customer base. Sophos offers a dedicated, flexible and generous Sophos Global Partner Program, with dedicated support, sales tools, training and certification, deal registration protection and competitive margins - including a program dedicated to MSP needs. Sophos designs products with features specifically for partners, such as Sophos Central-Partner dashboard that allows partners to centrally manage their customer endpoints and firewalls from a single dashboard. Partners have clear upsell and cross-sell opportunities within existing customers due to a broad portfolio of Sophos network and endpoint products that are able to directly share information.

The structure we have built over the last few years has enabled us to segment our partners and offer them the support and resources they need to be successful in the Cyber Security market.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

I believe the greatest challenge, for a leadership role like mine, is to align your team's goal to the goal of your organization. At times it is difficult to maintain this alignment in all the circumstances. During the last one year of the pandemic, this has become even more difficult.

I make sure that there is transparency in my team and every person on my team should be clear on the role they are playing to enable Sophos to reach its goals. This helps to maintain the positive energy of the team. Constant communication and 360-degree feedback helps to align the team with the organization.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

Advice I would give is be prepared to make mistakes and learn from them – computing, cybersecurity and the cyber threat landscape are all changing so rapidly, you will be on an amazing, steep, lifelong learning curve, but you will constantly have an interesting and varied career which is extremely motivating. This gets even more interesting when your role is a combination of channel and technology. Technology can change lives and channel is your lifeline to bring that change.



EKTA PUTHRANRegional Distribution

Regional Distribution & Channel Manager – MX Middle East & Africa

What do you love about your job? What inspires you? Work at Barco is always evolving into something better than what it was. Every day is different and is a constant adventure. The variability of my job is what gets me up in the morning and the reachability, in terms of countries I handle in the Middle East, gets me going during the day.

We provide state of art technology to multiple domains in the Regional market and the fact that I am able to transcend my experience and skillset to grow the regional business momentum in itself is a great motivational driver. Each project presents unique challenges, the

diversity of the work that I do ensures no day is like any other and I am always focused on bettering the overall experience of every single end user which makes one feel good when the day is done!

What is your business goal for the channel and how are you approaching this goal?

One of the core building blocks of Barco is "Together We Rise". This adequately embodies my fundamental goal of increasing the channel coverage and empowering them with the right tools and trainings.

In my observation over the past few years, what has really worked for me and continues to do so, is the fact that I have a unified partner plan that are aligned to precise business results. Value proposition assessments & rewards go hand in hand which primarily is a motivating factor for the partners. It ensures a competitive advantage and encourages them to have an aggressive go-to-market strategy. The conclusive idea is to create a healthy ecosystem where there is growth for one & all.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

Step one of resolving any issue, is to identify that there is one. Handling a high volume of channel partners cross MEA has its own repercussions as there will always be unforeseen intricate challenges that come up at the last juncture. Be it communication, commercial support or technical assistance, for me, it all boils down to having transparency from the start.

It is important to have an ethical approach where any situational support extended has to be justified and any reservation that comes in from the partners has to be resolved with positivity and compassion. The whole idea is to keep the partners informed and motivated. We value our partners a great deal and it is essential that they see the bigger picture Barco has for their growth and success.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

Technology, big data and services today has surpassed oil in value. My advice to women reading this would be to look outside the conventional box of marketing, PR and HR as Technology is the future and will always be in demand in developed countries. You don't need an IT degree to find work here as there are different verticals within a technology company that you can easily get in if you have the skill set and right work ethic.



HURAIRA GOWHAR Regional Sales Manager – MEA, Ring

What do you love about your job? What inspires you?

The commitment and ability to make neighbourhoods safer and build a better world is definitely joyful. Ring is committed to keeping homes and communities safe and connected and we hope to change the way homeowners view security by helping them keep an eye on their family and property from wherever they are. The freedom to stay creative and be a part of a team that is doing meaningful work to achieve this goal and overcome obstacles is exciting and that inspires me to work hard.

What is your business goal for the channel and how are you approaching this goal?

As the Internet of Things is set to disrupt the way we live, the awareness and demand for smart security devices like Ring that keeps families, neighborhoods and communities safe are growing. To fulfill our customer's growing needs, we have established a high performing multichannel network of distributers, retail and value-added partners across the Middle East. We owe our success to the channel partners and continue to invest and provide enablement support to ensure that we are capturing the market opportunities to lead the market space. We have been able to deepen our presence across different verticals both in B2B and B2C space with well-planned and expandable channels that are goal-driven and have an effective reach and connection with our customers.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

Challenges keep us motivated. Staying calm wins half the battle. Tackling the source of challenge is more energy-consuming than the challenge itself which makes it important to focus and define the challenge and cancel out noise. Also, knowing that feelings are not always facts, it is vital to dig deep and leverage data, and combine it with experience for a good judgement. Fortunately, I work in an environment where we are encouraged to think big, take bold decisions, make mistakes early and learn and recover quickly. Over the years, I have learnt to remain graceful when things don't work and so I go back to the drawing board and come back stronger.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

Women need to support each other especially in achieving higher roles. While number of women working in the tech industry has increased, we still see a gap of women in leadership roles worldwide. Michelle Obama in her book Becoming says, "If you don't get out there and define yourself, you'll be quickly and inaccurately defined by others." So, create your own leadership brand, stay competent and fierce and never hide what makes YOU.



MAYA ZAKHOUR

Channel Director, Middle East & Africa, Italy and Spain, at NetApp

What do you love about your job? What inspires you?

I have been fortunate most of my life to have jobs I have loved. Being passionate and loving what I do helps me reach my goals. The question, however, has really taken on a new meaning as I've spent so much time in the industry and seen it evolve and transform in term of job roles and achievements. The support environment at NetApp is so encouraging. NetApp cares about its employees and it makes me feel I am a part of a big family; I have the right support no matter in all my activities. The work can be hard sometimes, no doubt, but NetApp truly values people on a personal level, which makes the hardest days just as great. In these difficult times, I've had the chance to leave an impact on thousands of lives, helping organizations adopt the right business continuity by providing the best technology solutions! It is the best feeling ever!

What is your business goal for the channel and how are you approaching this goal?

I've always wanted to leave a good impact in the work that I do create my own legacy. I aspire to leave an impact on the channel industry, especially in these difficult times. This year I felt the impact while helping our partners thrive in a challenging environment, with the aim to survive as business. I am proud of how far I've come, and our partners can trust that I will always be to their side converting common challenges into opportunities.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

In my opinion, challenges present an opportunity to be creative and participate in a competitive situation to achieve solutions. It must not be seen as a setback, but more as a measure of our abilities, skills, and strengths. I welcome every challenge and consider it a way to learn and build a new skills, perspectives or expertise. It helps me achieve what I always thrive for: Leaving an Impact! I roll my sleeves with any new challenge and dedicate my efforts and time towards achieving the desired results. I ensure playing my role within a team and lead by example when needed as success is guaranteed only when a strong team joins efforts.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

I encourage all women who aspires to make a mark in the industry to build a strong business acumen that will help them build their confidence and push them to dream high. I believe life is by itself is an experience and we learn everyday something new, so be bold and dream big as you will be able to learn and achieve when you have the will.

"Be Bold, Be courageous, Be your Best!"



SELINA BIEBERSenior Regional Director for Turkey and MENA, GoDaddy

What do you love about your job? What inspires you?

In my opinion, part of loving your job comes from learning and developing yourself everyday – I like that feeling of progress at the end of each week. As the Regional Director for GoDaddy in MENA, I manage the business end-to-end, which allows me to delve into different aspects of running the business – marketing, product, ecommerce performance, customer care and much more – and map back their impact to our top-line goals. The ability to understand all facets of the business supports the facilitation of discussion, and therefore better decision making – together with having a truly talented and supportive team. In parallel, I love seeing how we support our customers. Speaking with them, amplifying their stories to inspire others and ensuring our Brand is supporting the digital transformation of small businesses in many markets across MENA, is the fulfilment part of my job.

What is your business goal for the channel and how are you approaching this goal?

GoDaddy empowers everyday entrepreneurs around the world by providing all of the help and tools to succeed online. GoDaddy is the place people come to name their idea, build a professional website, attract customers, sell their products and services, and manage their work. We want to make online tools accessible for all businesses, offering the right products for their needs – whatever level their tech skills

may be. From a channel point-of-view, we also want to equip designers and developers with the tools and help they need to succeed online – whether to build and develop a robust online presence for their clients, manage their client websites from a single dashboard or connect them with a community of other designers and developers. Ultimately, we want to support our customers as they move to digitalization for their business, with growth in the adoption of digital tools.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

Each day is different and so understanding how to prioritize tasks, delegate to the right people and manage my time effectively is the foundation for keeping the momentum and ensuring we are executing effectively.

Two key appr oaches I take when tackling challenges are as follows:

- The idea of an incubation period when it comes to an idea or problem to solve is something that really works. Taking a step back to think and mull over a problem or topic/idea, allowing other stimuli to shape how you would approach it, speaking with others really helps to address it or execute more effectively. This also holds true for communication, gathering your thoughts and emotions before responding to a difficult email is always better.
- Not everything has to be perfect. In order to run a business, you often need to make a call on when the right time is to launch a product, service, campaign or similar is. Waiting until you reach that state of perfection can hinder the project's success or lose valuable time, while launching can allow you to gather market insights, reactions and optimize on the go. Understanding this also allows you to address and prioritize tasks accordingly for the smooth running of your business.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

- Build authentic relationships: In a world where networking and connections is everything, make sure that you invest in cultivating relationships with people you cross paths with. You'll be surprised by what you might learn from every person you get to know.
 - Find the right partner for your business:
 - Choosing the right partner can be tricky, you need to do your research first, define your ideal partner, then create a list of potential partners.
 - Once you have the list of potential partners, you can create a scoring system and start eliminating according to it and prioritize the ones you'd like to contact.
 - Finding the right partner is a two-way path, in order for them to be an efficient partner to you, you also need to invest time, tools and resources to make the partnership work.
- Be customer centric: growing the industry will come from delivering on the customer needs, working together to focus on developing the right product offering for the audience, building the right partnerships and marketing frameworks, which should ultimately have the customer at the heart of it all.
- Be a confident decision-maker: Taking on a leadership role means having the confidence to make informed decisions and drive a team to execute on those decisions. Some decisions will be easier to take than others, but whether the outcome is positive or negative, your team looks to you to assess the reasoning behind these decisions and own the outcome.



SHAHD ALQUNAIBIT

Regional Director, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, North Africa, and Levant at Cisco AppDynamics

What do you love about your job? What inspires you?

I am passionate about understanding the technical challenges and business objectives which customers are grappling with. Technologists have had to cope with so much change over the last 12 months. The speed of innovation in response to COVID has been staggering. A recent AppDynamics report — Agents of Transformation 2021: The rise of full-stack observability — found that the speed of implementing digital transformation projects has increased 3X since the pandemic began. So, it's more important than ever that we invest time in building relationships with a variety of stakeholders, including C-level execs, to truly understand the complexity in their IT environment and problems they are trying to solve.

But when we get it right, and implement technology solutions which have a demonstrable impact on business performance, it is massively rewarding and the hard work is worth it.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

I am a committed, passionate, hard-working and detailoriented young professional. I enjoy constant learning and developing new skills. Early in my career I realized that my motivation comes from positively impacting others. I have worked in sales to help unlock hidden potential for customers and bring customer-centric experiences to life.

In my current role as Regional Director for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, North Africa, and the Levant at Cisco AppDynamics, there are fantastic opportunities for me to grow and develop my career. And more broadly, I believe this is a positive time for women in tech, especially with the vast improvement in the status of women globally, driven by a new focus on education, openness, and equality between men and women.

My life objective is to add more value to others' lives, as I am passionate about developing people from all backgrounds and supporting them to achieve, and even exceed, their goals. And my current role gives me the platform to make this a reality. Over the next few years, I want to develop my leadership skills further and foster others to become leaders and grow. I will be looking for opportunities to expand my responsibilities, build strong and reliable relationships within the MEA region, and make an impact in my country and beyond.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

Find a champion — male or female — who is willing to help you break through any glass ceiling that you may find yourself under. Just because you're good at what you do, it doesn't necessarily mean you'll be successful if you don't have the right leaders championing you. And always remember to pass it forward by being a mentor in the future.

Be humble and open to learning from everyone you come across. You can learn from not only your peers but also employees at every level — from your CEO to the security person and even the person who brings you tea. Have a willingness to accept that you know little in the grander scheme of things.

Be resilient, communicate clearly, have confidence in the ideas you put forward (while also leaving room to understand and consider opposing points of view), learn to code, and importantly stay true to your purpose.

Finally, change requires high levels of awareness, so read, read, read. Learning curves are often steep, but reading can really help speed up the process.



SHARMILA LUIE ENITTA
Team Lead - Inside Sales, Elitser
Technologies

What do you love about your job? What inspires you? What I love the most about my job is that I have the opportunity to help businesses choose the right solution to not only resolve their technology challenges but also enhance their operations. Knowing that what I do makes a difference in how technology is used in the larger society inspires me.

What is your business goal for the channel and how are you approaching this goal?

Our mission at Elitser is to reach \$10 million in earnings for the current year. To do this, we're focusing on social media marketing and meeting with our top 150 existing customers to carry out gap analysis on their environments, which will give us the opportunity to upsell our products and expand business.

Elitser Technologies has been working with ManageEngine for over 15 years and has been able to reach some of the leading firms in the UAE. Adding to that, our goal is to further establish ManageEngine products among IT departments of enterprises across all sectors in the region.

How do you tackle the various challenges in your job? What approach do you take?

The constant pressure to meet sales goals is an inevitable part of my job and is quite challenging. However, having a strategic plan has helped me achieve 70 percent of my sales goals ahead of my target deadlines. Nurturing your existing customers is an important factor in generating new business. Being associated with Elitser Technologies for 10 years, I have been able to build a strong relationship with our customers and gain their trust in our services.

We all struggle with multiple challenges, both in our work and personal lives, but navigating these challenges is what molds us into strong individuals. My approach is to accept these challenges as part of life and to turn them into opportunities—the bigger you dream, the bigger the challenge will be.

What is your advice to women who are aspiring to make a mark in the industry?

Don't let anyone tell you what you are or aren't capable of. Anything is possible if you put your heart and soul into it. My advice for women aspiring to become leaders of tomorrow is to stop doubting yourself. When you start doubting yourself, others will too. Be confident and comfortable in sharing your strengths and proclaiming your success.

REIMAGINING THE FUTURE OF WORK

Parag Gurumukhi, Deputy General Manager, IITC OMAN, tells Reseller ME how important it is to create an inclusive future of work by empowering people to work from anywhere at any time and optimising remote workers and distributed teams for performance, cost and agility.



hat are the advantages of a distributed work model? How are CISCO's business solutions helping

organisations build a distributed work model for the future?

We all know that work will never be the same again, and what we can say is that the sudden shift to the distributed work model has provided a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine everything about how we do our business and how we run our companies. In fact, with the massive transformation to remote work and the rise in coworking, distributed work environments are rapidly becoming the new norm.

Eventually, remote working allows increased flexibility and autonomy for employees. Working remotely also allows for better worklife balance and employee well-being. With no commute, no lunch rush, and no long hours in the office away from family or friends, working remotely can improve the health and wellness of employees by reducing stress and limiting exposure to potentially sick co-workers. In short, remote work equals an increase in productivity, and significant saving of company money.

All these changes in our methods will go

hand-in-hand with a change in our tools. Of course, we think CISCO has an important role to play and that the Secure Remote Workforce solutions from CISCO helps create an inclusive future of work by empowering workforce to work from anywhere at any time and optimising remote workers and distributed teams for performance, cost, and agility. IITC has helped prestigious clients in the government & private sectors in Oman in their digital transformation journey during these unprecedented times, helping business flow uninterruptedly, with secure and seamless collaboration.

Established under the aegis of Oman Holdings International (OHI) Group, International Information Technology Co. LLC (IITC) has grown to be one of the most successful and reliable technology solution providers in the Sultanate of Oman for the past three decades. We believe in the power of partnership and are the first Omani company in Oman to acquire the customer experience (CX) specialised partner title which helps our customers successfully adopt solutions in order to use them effectively to solve their business challenges. IITC has also been awarded the "Commercial Partner of The Year" title along with many other global and regional recognitions which are a true testament to our deep understanding and relationship with Cisco and our customers.

A resilient workplace is crucial for business success. What are the services and solutions offered by CISCO to help employees access technologies to help them work productively and securely?:

For a successful business, you need to make sure that everyone can work productively and securely, no matter where they're located. The Cisco Designed Secure Remote Work brings enterprise-grade, cloud-based collaboration and security together in one package that's easy to purchase, deploy, and use. The Secure Remote

Work package provides video conferencing, messaging, file sharing, and whiteboarding capabilities, all protected by cloud-based security, at a remarkably low cost. The Cisco Designed Secure Remote Work includes everything you need: Webex messaging and meetings for round-the-clock, work-from-anywhere collaboration, Secure Access by Duo for verifying the identity of users, devices, and applications, Umbrella Cloud Security for a first line of defense against threats and Cisco Secure Email Cloud Mailbox email security for blocking malware, spam, and phishing emails.

What are some of the market challenges that slow the adoption of digital products and technologies?

Although there are numerous benefits of adopting new technology, most businesses hesitate for one main reason – budget. Every successful technology adoption requires some upfront investment. Some see it as an extra expense, not worth the investment. Unless the solution is cost-effective and well proven, most businesses will steer away from it.

Lack of awareness is another common reason for slow adoption. Generally, businesses are not exposed to emerging technologies. Most of SMEs won't have enough technology experts who can demonstrate and articulate the value of new technologies. Many companies believe that integrating new technologies might disrupt the current workflow and cause more harm than good in a successfully running existing process. If a company has never experienced any problem with its existing technology, they may not find any reasons to change. Another common concern to hold-up is that employees might have a hard time learning a new system. This fear of failure restrains business owners from adopting innovation and moving forward with modern technology adoption.

How would you describe your partnership with Logicom? How is the market benefitting from this partnership?

Our partnership with Logicom has always helped us maintain our customer-first approach and deliver exceptional service. In addition, access to Logicom's e-Commerce platform assists in conducting business anytime, anywhere. Technical support from experienced resources and their architectural expertise ensures the effective positioning of suitable solutions and contributes to certification training of in-house resources. We deliver the latest promotions, technology updates & new releases to our end customers and keep them up-to-date with network, security & infrastructure solutions.



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CREATING COMPOSABLE SOLUTIONS FOR THE EVERYTHING CUSTOMER

Avaya's Fadi Moubarak on the Composable Enterprise and how the channel can transform to support it.



t's no secret that life and work have changed dramatically over the past year, and the IT channel is still grappling with those changes. Businesses who were once regular channel customers are now stretched to breaking point. While others are showing incredible growth that partners are working at break-neck speed to match.

Avaya, the global leader in solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration, believes it has these changes worked out, and indeed how the channel can respond to them. The firm's recent Life and Work Beyond 2020 research revealed that the pandemic has created lasting change in how we as consumers want to work and shop.

"As workers, we want a hybrid work environment that offers more choice and eliminates an inflexible daily grind. As consumers, we want to interact with businesses through the channels we prefer, and we expect in-the-moment responsiveness to address our unique needs," the report said.

How do partners help their customers address these changes? We spoke with Fadi Moubarak, Vice President – Channels, Avaya International, to find out.

What does the market look like today?

The market is still at a stage where it's trying to figure out what the changes are and where exactly the impacts lie. No-one is questioning what we're seeing – for instance changing consumer values, or the preference for hybrid working environments – but businesses are trying

to work out where things will really settle down.

But businesses don't have time to wait and see where things will settle down. By this point, according to our research, almost half of consumers believe that many organisations are using COVID-19 as an excuse to lower their services. And the businesses that are winning over hearts and minds – both large and small – are looking at how they can create value in the current environment.

We've seen Avaya talk about the "Everything Customer". Are these changing demands part of what makes up the Everything Customer?

We are all the Everything Customer. Sometimes we want to shop online but sometimes we want the comfort of the instore experience. Sometimes we want to serve ourselves but other times we also want to interact with a human. Sometimes we want our information used to personalise service, to proactively send us information and offers relevant to us. But other times we berate organisations for not respecting our privacy.

The bottom line is we want a lot. And meeting these expectations is the big challenge that organisations are faced with today.

To serve them, organisations are turning to technology providers like us and our partners. They want to deliver effortless experiences, because they are dealing with sometimes very tense customers, challenged and on-edge customers, who expect to get things simply and quickly.

Our job is to deliver not only the technology, but also the mindset change that is required to deliver that effortless experience. We need to make it easy to innovate, and to quickly compose solutions that answer customer pain points.

What do you mean when you say 'composing solutions? How are these types of solutions different to what you've previously sold, and what's in it for partners?

Composable solutions refer to the agility and ability of organisations to put together quickly, solutions to address this very dynamic business environment. It's about building blocks and getting them to work together

seamlessly to deliver new functionalities that customers expect. In this customer experience space, this means more than just multichannel communications – it is about connecting, orchestrating and managing a Total Experience, which includes EX, CX, Multiexperience, UX and everything in between.

What Avaya is doing now is that we're keeping that concept in mind and all our new and existing solutions are being developed, packaged and reshaped to be able to be consumed in collaboration with or as part of a bigger Total Experience framework.

But being able to offer this would necessarily require some sort of channel transformation, so what does that look like?

What we've been telling our partners is that, very often, customers expect anything that's available to be brought to them via our partners. And with an established long-term relationship with their customers, built on trust and understanding of their business, our channel is best suited today to deliver on the next set of challenges.

Many of our partners are transforming their skills to understand customer business challenges and are using their technical skills to assess the best solutions out there and how these solutions can be consumed together.



WE'VE EVOLVED OUR CHANNEL PROGRAM TO INCENTIVISE HELPING CUSTOMERS MIGRATE TO CLOUD. THIS DELIVERS ACCELERATED VALUE FOR CUSTOMERS, WHICH IN TURN CREATES VALUE FOR OUR PARTNERS."

And what is Avaya doing to help those partners transform in the same way as the early adopters have?

First is our solution portfolio, which has evolved and expanded considerably over the past few years. The Avaya OneCloud proposition helps our partners serve their customers' needs and compose solutions by virtue of its flexibility its ability to deliver that all-important Total Experience.

Made up of UCaaS, CCaaS, and CPaaS, Avaya OneCloud is an AI-powered experience platform that delivers speed to value, hassle-free migration to secure, reliable platforms that solve business challenges straight away, and predictable expenditures and the ability to scale when necessary – exactly what businesses want in this new environment.

We're seeing a lot of success as our partners join us in embracing this approach to solve our customers' challenges. Our recently announced financial results demonstrate this. Our revenue in the second quarter of the year was up 8% year over year, and our ARR increased 31% sequentially, up over 400% from a year ago. Cloud revenue grew 17% year over year, and we displaced a significant number of competitors, signing around 1,500 new customers for the third consecutive quarter.

We've also evolved our channel program to incentivise helping customers migrate to cloud. This delivers accelerated value for customers, which in turn creates value for our partners.

Where does it all go from here?

The ripple effects of what we faced over the past year are going to last a while, even once the pandemic is under control. The impact on the channel, and the disruption of cash flow from different industries and between different verticals, is going to be long-lasting.

But with any change, there is an opportunity. So how we address these new opportunities together with our customers and partners is our top priority now. We're achieving this with the right solutions that can be consumed in the most efficient and fastest possible ways, because that's going to be the name of the game for many years to come.



FORGING AHEAD

Anita Joseph, Editor, Reseller ME, caught up with Nathan Clements, General Manager at Exclusive Networks Middle East & Alain Penel, Regional Vice-President, Middle-East & Pakistan at Fortinet, to find out how the partnership between the two companies is helping businesses fast track their digital transformation agendas and successfully combat some of the biggest cybersecurity challenges today.

PARTNER
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ENHANCED SECURITY.
THIS IS WHERE
EXCLUSIVE NETWORKS
& FORTINET COME IN
TO PLAY."

ow would you describe the partnership between Exclusive Networks (EXN) and Fortinet? How has it helped both companies?

Alain: Fortinet's partnership with Exclusive Networks is geared to help enterprises embrace digital innovation while navigate some of today's biggest cybersecurity challenges. Exclusive Networks plays a major role supporting Fortinet solutions, part of the Fortinet Security Fabric, as well as training the teams through the Fortinet Network Security Experts (NSE) Certification Program that enables partners to master tactical skills like configuration, troubleshooting as well as planning and orchestration.

What does this partnership mean for the region?

Alain: Exclusive Networks robust vendor portfolio and vast channel network make them one of the right partners for Fortinet in the region. Exclusive Networks has a strong reputation as a distributor of IT and cybersecurity products. They are one of the key contributors on our Small

Business activity with a very active and strong engine to support and develop the partner landscape.

Cloud is the "in" thing now. What are some of the cloud trends that are dominating the regional market today? Is there a shared strategy for EXN & Fortinet to incorporate these trends? **Nathan:** It is common for organisations to use multiple cloud service providers and software-as-a-service (SaaS) platforms. Public, private, and hybrid cloud all coexist, serving different needs and applications. This complexity creates challenges for cloud security professionals, such as monitoring data, detecting anomalies, and intercepting bad behaviours. The adoption of public cloud platforms in the region such as AWS and Azure has been large and dramatic. Not surprisingly, partner cloud expertise and solution-building skills have been stretched to keep up with ever-increasing customer demands, especially on the enterprise level. Partner organisations are pressured to fill the cloud skills gap, particularly for network architects who are skilled on multiple levels. Cloud complexity requires enhanced security. This is where Exclusive Networks and Fortinet come in to play.



With the growth of the cloud, naturally, security becomes a huge question. What are some of the latest cybersecurity tools and approaches that Fortinet has developed?

Nathan: Not all types of data can be in a public cloud, which is why some forward-thinking companies are choosing a mixture of hybrid cloud services. Best placed to serve this transition is Fortinet with strong offerings across traditional firewalling, web application firewalling, sandboxing, configuration security and central management. Fortinet have deep relationships and native integration with AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, Oracle Cloud, and Alibaba, and the products align with their migration programs, best practices, tools, and frameworks. In addition, Fortinet have partnerships and technology integration with independent software vendors such as VMware, Nutanix, and Cisco. Their approach allows applications and systems components to interoperate across boundaries, between cloud instances and even between architectures.

Alain: As cloud adoption accelerates, organisations are increasingly reliant on cloud-based services and infrastructures. Yet, organisations often end up with a heterogeneous set of technologies in use, with disparate

security controls in various cloud environments. Fortinet Adaptive Cloud Security Solutions provide the necessary visibility and control across cloud infrastructures, enabling secure applications and connectivity from data centre to cloud.

Integration & Automation of security infrastructure is a challenge for most organisations today. How does Fortinet help to bridge this gap? Nathan: Many organisations have added point solutions, but the increased security complexity contributes to a number of problems. Security teams are faced with too many vendors to manage, too many alerts to investigate, manual processes that slow response times, and a lack of trained staff to manage the expanding workloads. It is clear that companies that can automate routine tasks can free up time for other work that adds more value.

The addition of security orchestration, automation, and response (SOAR) capabilities to the security architecture can help alleviate these pressures. Using FortiSOAR, security operations teams can improve collaboration, control, and SOC automation through out-ofthe-box connectors or customisable frameworks that pull together all of the organisation's security tools while reducing alert fatigue. FortiSOAR centralises tools and amplifies the efforts of SOC teams, empowering them to rapidly respond, automate tasks, and execute actions across the organisation's security stack.

Alain: Security-driven networking is an essential strategy to secure today's dynamic digital infrastructures. With an integrated security platform in place, organisations can embrace digital innovation and expand their digital footprint without exposing critical resources and new attack surfaces to new risks. The Fortinet Security Fabric delivers broad, integrated, and automated protection across an organisation's entire digital attack surface from IoT to the edge, network core and to multi-clouds:

AS CLOUD ADOPTION ACCELERATES. ORGANISATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY RELIANT ON CLOUD-**BASED SERVICES AND** INFRASTRUCTURES. **YET, ORGANISATIONS** OFTEN END **UP WITH A HETEROGENEOUS SET OF TECHNOLOGIES IN USE. WITH DISPARATE** SECURITY CONTROLS IN VARIOUS CLOUD ENVIRONMENTS."

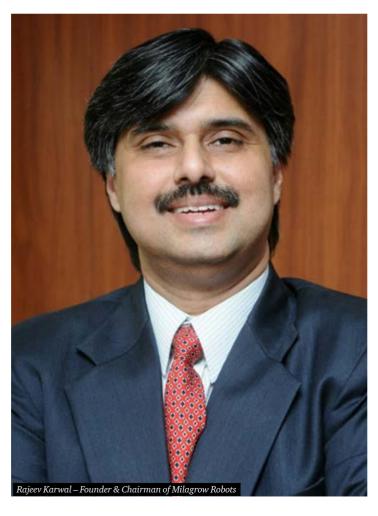
Our broad portfolio enables coordinated threat detection and policy enforcement across the entire digital attack surface and lifecycle with converged networking and security across edges, clouds, endpoints, and users.

Integrated and unified security, operations, and performance across different technologies, locations, and deployments enables complete visibility. It also tightens security of all form factors including hardware appliances, virtual machines, cloud-delivered, and X-as-a-Service.

Automated: a context aware, self-healing network and security posture leverages cloud-scale and advanced AI to automatically deliver near-real-time, user-to-application coordinated protection across the Fabric.

TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOR ROBOTICS ADOPTION

Rajeev Karwal – Founder & Chairman of Milagrow Robots & Shahzad Ahmed – Chairman & CEO at Blue Ocean Global, spoke to Anita Joseph, Editor at Reseller ME, about how consumer robots are taking the world by storm.





ell us more about
Milagrow Robots-what
is the market reaction
to these "consumer
robots?"

Rajeev: Milagrow Robots was founded in 2007 and has been a robotics brand since 2011. We have the largest range of robots in the world under our brand name. We have floor cleaning robots, window cleaning robots, wall cleaning robots, air duct cleaning robots, pool cleaning robots, lawn mowing robots, we have humanoids, education robots, plus robotic components. The consumer segment is dominated by the floor cleaning robots, and also window, floor and pool cleaning robots. In the industrial segments, there are two industries that have taken extremely well to us, that is, the facilities management and the hospitality industry. In the last one year, the growth of these robots has been multifold. We ourselves grew fivefold, i.e. 500% over the previous year. Now that the offices are slowly opening up, we are seeing great traction in key industries such as healthcare, museums, airports, educational institutions, real estate and smaller restaurants, even office canteens.

Why do you think there's a sudden spurt in demand for robots in the market?

Rajeev: The pandemic brought in varying degrees of a total lockdown. And when a lockdown happens, there is a severe restriction on movement and people are not able to go to out. We all know that homes need cleaning-that's one of the most important aspects. So, when people realise that there are robots that can do these tasks, they try and get hold of one. People are now becoming more and more aware of the benefits of robots to take care of everyday tasks. One year ago, there were no robots in any of the retail outlets or large format stores. But today, you'll find most stores keeping one or two brands. We feel utility is driving the demand for robots.

What does the company's entry into the Middle East market mean? What are your expectations?

Rajeev: Milagrow Robots was set up with the notion that one human being should not serve another human being for menial domestic tasks. Crucial manpower should be more involved in important tasks that contribute to the society and not menial chores. If we reskill this group of people, they can contribute much better to society and to the economy. It is Milagrow Robots' global mission to eliminate humans doing menial activities. This principle applies to every new market we enter into.

There's another fact that Milagrow Robots believes in: that robots can be humans, but humans can never be robots. For tasks that are repetitive, for tasks that require a huge degree of precision and effectiveness and are timebound, robots are ideal and they bring in tremendous value. They also bring in huge return on investments over a period of time. This can be as high as 4,000% to 5,000%. The payback period for the investments can be between 4-5 months in most cases. So, why will somebody not tap into this huge opportunity and make the necessary investments? We see a tremendous



FOR TASKS THAT ARE REPETITIVE, FOR TASKS THAT REQUIRE A HUGE DEGREE OF PRECISION AND EFFECTIVENESS AND ARE TIME-BOUND, ROBOTS ARE IDEAL AND THEY BRING IN TREMENDOUS VALUE."

possibility in the Middle East, for robotic adoption and we have made many, many changes in our products to suit the global market environment today. For instance, all our floor cleaning robots can take Sodium Hypochlorite 1% which kills Covid spores on the floor, all our robots have HEPA 12 filters which can filter out the Covid virus and all our robots are IoT devices which can be used by customers sitting in the comfort of their homes and it helps us do trouble shooting for our customers, instead of visiting them physically at their homes, which helps in social distancing during this time of the pandemic. We are also able to advise our customers remotely about any problems they may face, and the possible solutions.

We have incorporated a lot of changes and customers find it extremely useful and convenient. All of our surveys tell us that brands which do well in public emergency situations like the pandemic, are brands that provide safety, security and hygiene to the customers, which is proving to be true.

With digital transformation on the fast-track, how are Milagrow robots helping to close the gap between humans and technology?

Rajeev: That's one of the key things these robots do. For instance, imagine buying a floor cleaning robot. You would want this robot to map the floor area by itself, you'd want it to map the cleaning by itself, and you'd want it to have real-time movements, all by itself. You would not want it to go into other areas of the home and disturb the arrangements there. For instance, when the robots climb on top of a carpet to clean it, it should fold its wet mop as not to dirty the carpet. You would also want it to mop the floor with added pressure and also pay particular attention to the corners, like humans do. You would also prefer the robots to self-wash its mops once cleaning is done. Our latest robot, which we are going to launch soon, has all of these features. It even has a self-mop cleaning function with 40 Newtons of pressure with two water tanks-one is a clean

water tank, and one is a dirty water tank. It has two hydraulic shafts which push the mop firmly on the floor to clean stubborn dirt. These are exactly what any household requires when using a robot mop. In fact, if you study the needs of the customer well, there is nothing that robotic technology cannot do. But the only challenge which we find the robot may not be able to do, is have a sense of empathy, which would make it anticipate different needs and react intuitively to situations around.

If you look at the Milagrow Robots logo, it is a heart and the division's original name is Milagrow Human Tech, and that is because we believe that technology must create products that are humane in nature and make it easier for people to lead their lives. We aim to introduce best-in-class and well researched products into the market.

You've signed Blue Ocean Global as distributors for the region. What does this partnership mean for the market?

Shahzad: As a company, Blue Ocean Global is a little different in its approach, in the sense that we don't just look at one specific country. We are a global master distribution company, and we operate in nearly 40 countries across the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, Australasia and Europe. Milagrow Robots and Blue Ocean Global share the same vision- that they are looking at a global level in terms of brand positioning, and our distribution strategy is also on the same lines. We synergise quite well in that direction. So, we'll start with the Middle East, but will eventually move worldwide, including Europe. The interesting thing about the Middle East is that it has a very young population and so it is open to technology adoption much faster. We're talking to some of the partners like Amazon and Noon, as well as the typical electronic retail stores which adopt this technology quickly and we find that this is a growth area that is fast paced right now for reasons we all know. So, we have the ability to move this brand into all the four verticals-online, retail, B2B and the institutional level.



MILAGROW ROBOTS &
BLUE OCEAN GLOBAL
SHARE THE SAME VISIONTHEY ARE LOOKING
AT A GLOBAL LEVEL
IN TERMS OF BRAND
POSITIONING AND
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STRATEGY IS ALSO ON
THE SAME LINES."

Rajeev: Milagrow Robots understands technology, Milagrow Robots understands branding and the various products that can make a difference in the market. Blue Ocean Global understands the go-to market strategy much better than us in this part of the world and many other areas globally, and we hope that after our initial success in the Middle East market, we will further strengthen our partnership into other areas globally. Milagrow Robots has opened its first office in DAFZA, Dubai and we hope that our partnership will grow from strength to strength in the coming months. We're looking at this partnership from a long-term perspective, especially because the value systems of the two organisations match perfectly. We're taking it gradually, we don't want to rush into the market in such a way that we spoil the market for others, we want a strong investment in the market. Robots is one category which is all-pervasive-we believe that in the next 10-12 years, there will be 5-10 robots in each house, to tackle different tasks. Blue Ocean Global is also aware of it. Together, we know that we're not here to arrive with a bang and set the market on fire. We are committed to this growing category

of robots which is set for dramatic growth in the near future, in multiple areas of customer requirements.

Finally, what are your growth plans and strategies for the dynamic, fast evolving Middle East market?

Shahzad: We would like to plant a robot in every house-that's our strategy. And to make that happen, we obviously need a game plan. Let's look at an example: operators such as Etisalat and Du could be worth a tie-up since they are part of every home. One of the brands that we have right now is called Gigaset and we've been planting this cordless phone into every home. In the last five years, we've planted nearly two-and-a-half million phones, which basically means two-and-a-half million houses, through such telephone operators. This means that our strategy will evolve as we go along-it is evolving all the time. There's going to be a retail part, an online part and even an operator part in this strategy. Every channel is looking for new products and new ideas that resonate with the customer. Our job as a distribution house, is to resonate with these various distribution points and get into the homes and offices of every individual. We are seeing robots happen as a global trend-just to give an example, a single SKU of one of the robots in the US is selling over 150,000 numbers in a month! It's growing massively and you can imagine where it's headed! For this growth to be replicated here, obviously it will take time, so what is required from our side is patience and the longterm vision to capture the market.

Milagrow Robots is one of the first few robotics companies to come to this part of the world and set up an office here. Even today, some of the major players in this segment are not present here-not even the biggest ones. That is the kind of thinking we have-that to understand a market, you need to have physical presence there and understand the customers, the various trends and the local requirements-basically, what works and what doesn't. We've been looking into all of these, and so are extremely confident that the brand will do very well over a period of time.

RED HAT AND SNAM COLLABORATE TO DELIVER ENERGY SOLUTIONS AT THE EDGE



ed Hat, Inc., the world's leading provider of open source solutions, announced that Snam, one of the world's largest gas networks, has deployed Red Hat OpenShift and other cloud-native technologies to help drive the organisation's digital transformation. Using a broad set of Red Hat's powerful open hybrid cloud solutions, Snam can better manage and scale applications across distributed infrastructure, including at the edge, to prepare for a hybrid cloud and multicloud future.

Headquartered in San Donato Milanese, Italy, Snam oversees one of the world's largest natural gas transportation networks, 2 LNG terminals and the largest European natural gas storage capacity; it has participations in GCA, TAG (Austria), Terega (France), Interconnector UK (UK), DESFA (Greece), TAP, and ADNOC Gas Pipeline (UAE). Snam's mission is to help guide the evolution of energy transition by providing an innovative sustainable energy network that enables more stable supplies to Europe, while developing new businesses and technologies fostering a low-carbon future, such as H2 and biomethane.

In an effort to better serve the digital needs of its internal operations, while being able to provide the digital agility and flexibility its new business units require to succeed, Snam undertook a company-wide digital transformation program. Backed by the open hybrid cloud expertise and technologies from Red Hat, Snam has started to renew

its existing application map and make interactions leaner and more effective among its business services, while developing an entirely new technology stack for its IoT and data needs, designed to be ready to connect up to 30,000 devices and able to handle 100x more data, enabling the intelligent network.

Snam deployed several Red Hat technologies and services to support this evolution, including:

- Red Hat OpenShift, the industry's leading enterprise Kubernetes platform, as the flexible foundation to run and scale applications across its current on-premises data centres extending out to the edge. This also included Red Hat OpenShift Data Foundation, which provides software-defined storage for containerised applications.
- Red Hat Advanced Cluster Management for Kubernetes to deploy and manage clusters and applications at a number of edge locations distributed throughout Italy.
- Red Hat Quay as the global registry platform for efficiently managing containerised content across data centres and to the edge, focusing on cloud-native and DevSecOps development models and environments.
- Red Hat Integration solutions to connect disparate and distributed applications and data.
- Red Hat Consulting to support the IT team with the design, build and deployment, as well as the implementation of agile frameworks and methodologies, including DevOps, CI/CD and software-defined data centre and networking.

Through the adoption of Red Hat

technologies, Snam can now deploy applications in an automated manner in as little as 30 minutes, improving by more than 10x the time to delivery of its new software products. Red Hat OpenShift has been deployed on-premises and on the edge of the network, with Snam also taking advantage of the public cloud, using Microsoft Azure Red Hat OpenShift, a jointly engineered managed Red Hat OpenShift service supported by Microsoft and Red Hat. This enables Snam to scale workloads and applications across any public or private cloud in order to meet future business requirements, reducing potential risks around cloud lock-in, and helping streamline the platformisation of its application map, while being flexible to consume and provide new digital data and services, leveraging its business expertise and the opportunities offered by the current pace of digital technologies evolution.

"Organisations like Snam, which deal with a dynamic landscape of regulations and market demands, need to be able to rely on flexible infrastructure that can scale to meet the changing requirements of today and tomorrow, including out to the edge as a natural extension of the open hybrid cloud. Red Hat is pleased to support Snam as it reshapes its IT environment for the digital-first economy, enabling services to run anywhere and everywhere the business needs, and freeing its teams to focus on innovation", said Stefanie Chiras, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Red Hat Enterprise Linux Business Unit, Red Hat.

LEADING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH INNOVATION

Sakkeer Hussain, Director – Sales & Marketing, D-Link Middle East & Africa, tells Anita Joseph, Editor, Reseller ME in an exclusive interview, how D-Link is committed to innovation and helping its partners in their digital transformation journey.



igital transformation has accelerated in the last one year. How has D-Link's journey been and what are the key learnings?

D-Link Middle East and Africa has grown significantly in 2020, despite being a difficult year for the market. We experienced a definite growth by unveiling high demand products last year which helped businesses during the pandemic. The journey has been productive as well as full of learnings for us and for our partner ecosystem.

Over the last year we have seen remote working models being implemented almost overnight to adhere to the social distancing requirements. This has greatly accelerated the demand for networking and cloud range of products. To sustain and succeed with remote business models, organisations require robust technologies that support network performance. Technologies such as IoT, cloud, 5G, Wi-Fi 6, cybersecurity and other networking solutions will play a critical role in driving the growth of the industry going forward.

One of the key learnings has been that Business Continuity Plans are very important and must be in place well in advance, no matter the size of the company. 2020 has reinforced the fact that the future is digital-, cloud-, softwareand applications-led. If businesses are not seriously planning to digitally transform, then they risk not being able to effectively communicate and engage with customers, as well as suffer huge losses in the next crisis. Another crucial learning is that securing your business comprehensively must be the first priority before anything else, especially in an increasingly digital world.

Tell us more about D-Link's commitment to support its regional partners.

D-Link is dedicated to supporting partners with useful tools, resources, and the know-how of managing and scaling their business to new heights as well as to acquire a large customer base.

D-Link's partner ecosystem comprising resellers, VARs, systems integrators and solutions providers, have the opportunity to grow their business portfolio, significantly boost their profitability, and get the solutions to the market faster, through our elaborate programs and resources.

Our channel network has easy access to all our marketing, sales and partner-specific resources. Partners are also able to enhance their business profile by adding D-Link's business class solutions to their product portfolio, and offering customers latest advanced technologies to meet their business objectives.

Channel partners are the core of D-Link's business. We are committed to building our partners' business growth for the long-term and enabling them to leverage and unlock all the market opportunities.

At a time when spending (both consumer & commercial) is being curbed, have channel partners had to lower their revenue growth expectations for the foreseeable future? Currently, the market continues to be challenging as COVID-19 restrictions are still effective in most countries and customers are even more cautious with their budgets. But that doesn't mean there are no opportunities or partners have to lower their revenue growth expectations.

I would say partners are in the best possible place because their role is to act as the bridge to help customers be connected with cutting-edge technologies. They have the unique knowledge of both worlds – what customers need and which technologies can help solve those challenges. They should be going beyond just selling products to being customers' trusted advisors, especially at a time like this, to help achieve business outcomes.

Organisations across verticals are accelerating their digital transformation journeys – transitioning their workloads to complete cloud and software environments, seeking robust cybersecurity solutions and deploying automation and remote technology innovations. Now more than ever, customers require experts to help them make these changes and meet their digital objectives at a quick pace. This is where channel partners can continue to play a critical role in creative ways.

Many organizations are also increasingly outsourcing their IT needs and partnering with managed service providers, which is another avenue of opportunity for the channel. By identifying areas where they have core strengths in, understanding current market trends and being proactive, channel partners can truly become the champions that customers seek.

I believe partners should not lower their revenue growth expectations but instead adopt a more positive outlook and find new areas of opportunity by thinking out of the box.

What are some of the main trends and opportunities in the digital connectivity solutions market today? Although remote working models were accelerated as a necessity of a crisis, according to recent reports, it is here to stay; especially as both businesses and employees experience its advantages. This means organizations will continue to need advanced digital connectivity solutions to support its remote working policies and models. Customers will have to invest in solutions around IoT, cloud, 5G, Wi-Fi 6, cybersecurity and other networking technologies that offer employees flexibility, speed, seamless collaborations and uninterrupted connections. Subscription models and

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managed services will increasingly be adopted. This all amounts to increased opportunities for the technology industry and channel partners.

What are some of the new, cutting edge products and services that D-Link has in the market right now? Right from the beginning of this year, D-Link has already unveiled several innovations.

D-Link's latest offerings are around mydlink, Wi-Fi 6, 5G, and 2.5 Gigabit Ethernet solutions that digitally transform the home to meet users' needs during and post pandemic.

The new DUB-E250 is the smallest USB-C 2.5G Ethernet Adapter on the market that breaks network bottlenecks by enabling 2.5 times the bandwidth of a Gigabit ethernet connection and makes feasible many more high-performance online activities.

The DMS-106XT is our new unmanaged switch that accelerates network efficiency and delivers uninterrupted online experiences, which are increasingly becoming crucial in both business and personal lives.

D-Link has also presented its latest DCS-8300LHV2 Full HD Wi-Fi Camera with AI-based person detection. This intelligent camera can identify human motion, minimizing false alarms and ensuring that users get the alerts that matter. Not only does the DCS-8300LHV2 capture video in Full HD 1080p with a 120-degree field of view, but it also features 360-degree adjustable positioning and 5m night vision so that users see everything, even in the dark.

We have also announced our new COVR-X1870 Series Whole Home Mesh Wi-Fi 6 Systems, including multi-pack options that are all equipped with Wi-Fi 6 and mesh technology to provide faster speeds, greater capacity, and less network congestion for the modern device-dense smart home.

From launching solutions like D-Link Thermal Solution Fever Screening Kit and D-Link Temperature Measurement Face Recognition Terminal suite of products to remote work management solutions such as the Nuclias Managed Wireless Networking Solution portfolio, D-Link has also been at the forefront of innovation over the past year.

TRANSFORMING THE SMART WAY

Mahesh Vishwanath, Director – Digital Transformation, Smart Business Solutions, Raqmiyat LLC, tells Reseller ME why companies must explore and invest in modern technologies to accelerate their digital customer experience and how Raqmiyat helps them do this.



igital Transformation is the buzzword today. How is Raqmiyat helping companies in this journey?
We believe that digital transformation initiatives don't stop with just a single application. It is a

transformation initiatives don't stop with just a single application. It is a process of innovation and Raqmiyat gives unprecedented access to capabilities, resources, and talent innovation by offering world-class digital transformation solutions and technologies to our customers with our strong connections across the region. We achieve this by working closely with our regional digital transformation technology partners to realise the value of great digital businesses for all sizes.

There are still a lot of businesses that do not have a proper digital transformation strategy in place. How does Raqmiyat help them stay ahead of the game?

The business landscape has changed and digitalisation is top priority now. Our ultimate goal is to enhance customer experience, operational processes and business models in line with a clear and



measurable objective, as well as align the executive leadership and engagement.

With the COVID-19 pandemic having drastically altered the way business is done, how can companies deliver the best in class customer experiences today?

In today's digital world, companies must explore and invest in modern technologies to accelerate the digital customer experience in order to transform faster, with omnichannel customer journeys and ensuring consistency. Great digital customer experiences can be created by collecting customer feedback, mapping the customer journey, customer personas, and formulating an omnichannel strategy.

Today, organisations are looking beyond traditional solutions to achieve business benefits. What are some of the new age digital products and solutions, in your opinion, that help optimise ONE OF THE
BIGGEST
CHALLENGES IN
IMPLEMENTING
DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION
IS THE ADOPTION
& ACCEPTANCE
OF MODERN
TECHNOLOGIES
WHICH COME
WITH WORKFORCE
PUSHBACK."

business outcomes?

Raqmiyat's digital services help overcome challenges and transform businesses by leveraging digital technologies. Our cutting-edge technology offerings such as no-code / low code digital transformation platform, AI-rich conversational interfaces with smart bot platform, unified enterprise planning, business intelligence and analytics, security and paperless office solutions & enterprise business process automation platform (RPA & IPA) are a few digital products within the Raqmiyat digital portfolio that help in legacy modernisation.

What is the biggest challenge in implementing digital transformation?

One of the major challenges would be the adoption and acceptance of modern technologies which come with workforce pushback. Other barriers would include the lack of expertise to lead digitisation initiatives, lack of an overall digitisation strategy & budgetary constraints.

INTERVIEW // RACKSPACE TECHNOLOGY



LEADING THE CLOUD MIGRATION MARKET

George Pawlyszyn, GM, Middle East and Africa, Rackspace Technology, explains how the company has managed to carve a niche for itself in the multicloud market and how it is well-positioned to respond to the growing demand for cloud services.

Middle East entry, how has Rackspace Technology progressed, especially in a dynamic, fast growing and changing market?
We've had tremendous growth in our first year, and as a company there's been some really exciting developments. We launched in the Middle East in March 2020 and soon after that we rebranded to Rackspace Technology and became a publicly listed company (NASDAO: RXT).

ne year on since its

During our first year we have supported a number of companies in the region on their cloud migration journeys including Aramex, the global logistics and transportation solutions company, which migrated from on-premise data centres to Amazon Web Services (AWS) following a comprehensive Professional Services consultation.

How has the demand been for managed cloud services in the last one year, both from a financial and operational perspective?

Cloud adoption and opportunities will continue to expand, leading to a \$1 trillion market by 2024, according to IDC. The growth of this adoption has accelerated during the pandemic, but Rackspace Technology has been well-placed to respond to the high demand as companies pivot to more cloudcentric ways of working.

This year, we expect our Middle East and Africa operations will account for 40% per cent of EMEA's growth thanks to our multicloud offerings as well as our recent launch, Elastic Engineering -

a flexible way to consume cloud services with the support of a team of experts to develop assessments, migrations and manage cloud services in a scalable way.

How do managed cloud providers like Rackspace Technology now offer value-add to their offerings compared to organisations going direct to Hyperscalers?

Rackspace Technology's legacy has helped us carve our path into the multicloud market. We have over 15,000 customers across EMEA and they stay with us because we have deep in-house skills and expertise to assist our customers on their private or public cloud migrations. We understand that IT needs to support a company's overall business objectives and we work with agility and pace to solve this for our customers. Flexibility is a key

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component of this and with our service offerings, in particular the launch of Elastic Engineering, we are able to create a bespoke experience to make their goals a reality.

Would you agree that there is a sudden shift to a multicloud model? If so, what are the advantages, and is the model here to stay?

We are experiencing a tectonic shift towards the need for multicloud services and to support this demand, Rackspace Technology repositioned last year to be the leading end-to-end multicloud services company. Working extremely closely with the hyperscalers - Google Cloud, AWS and Microsoft Azure, means we can support our customers throughout their entire migration journeys, both with private and public environments. Very few companies are able to do anything like this, but it is crucial.

In addition, data residency requirements mean that hyperscalers are opening in multiple GCC countries to enable governments to take advantage of the cloud. Some entities will still require dedicated private clouds.

As companies evolve rapidly, perhaps more quickly than expected, and especially as they seek to become less reliant on legacy technology, operational challenges inevitably arise. Choosing the right cloud provider, or combinations can leave some overwhelmed by the amount of choice. However, in many cases, multicloud does emerge as the most effective solution, allowing companies to use public and private cloud systems together, and tailor solutions to a business's specific needs.

SITE TECHNOLOGY: STRENGTHENING BUSINESS RESILIENCY

Fady Hasan, Sales & Operations Manager, Site Technology, tells Reseller ME how the evolution of remote work is being shaped by two powerful forces: the growing adoption of artificial intelligence in the workplace & the expansion of the workforce to include both on-and-off balance sheet talent.

changing-what are some of the important trends that are driving this change?

The world around us has changed drastically and the work environment has also evolved over the last few years. Technology has advanced, from smartphones and light weight laptops to Artificial Intelligence and Robotic Process Automation, which in turn, has transformed and revolutionised business practices and the way people work. This evolution is

he future of work is

advanced, from smartphones and light weight laptops to Artificial Intelligence and Robotic Process Automation, which in turn, has transformed and revolutionised business practices and the way people work. This evolution is being shaped by two powerful forces: the growing adoption of Artificial Intelligence in the workplace, and the expansion of the workforce to include both on-and-off balance sheet talent, often referred to as the open talent continuum. These shifts could lead us to reconsider the roles of individuals. Some of the important trends driving this change are:

- 1. Increase in the adoption and use of Artificial Intelligence.
- 2. More focus on privacy and security.
- 3. Greater technology integration, for instance, 5G.
- Transformation of the workplace and supporting work from anywhere & any device concepts.
- 5. Digital transformation leading to security transformation.
- Ensuring business continuity irrespective of natural calamities or pandemics such as COVID-19.

What are some of the cutting-edge products and solutions that are helping companies and the workforce transition to the new business and work paradigms?

- 1. Artificial Intelligence RPA solutions
- 2. 5G Network Architecture
- 3. Info Security & Cybersecurity solutions
- 4. Secure remote workers (collaboration tools & digital workspace)
- 5. DevOps, Containers and Kubernetes environment

Innovation and adaptability are key to resilience in a rapidly transforming market -how are you helping to promote Cisco's range of business resiliency solutions? During Covid- 19, Site Technology was at the forefront of its customer's needs by emphasising the value of Cisco Webex and secure work through the Any Connect platform. In addition to this, we also provided critical business services tied to operational environments to several customers through Cisco's Smartnet service platform, combined with our own managed services.

We also ensured the availability of resources when they were needed the most, in the safest way possible.

Site Technology is dealing with customers to deploy and deliver Cisco solutions that are centred around optimised business use cases with proven value and we are focusing on secure products in email, end point and web security too.

We have also embraced Cisco's cloud managed networking products from Meraki that allows customers to manage their distributed environments from a single pane thereby reducing the need to travel and attend office in a lockdown environment.

As digital transformation gathers momentum, securing digital assets



has become a major point of concern. So, how are you helping businesses in this aspect?

Digital transformation is not just a term, it's a journey for organisations, in which IT works hand-in-hand with the business team. With help of automations the traditional repetitive processes are enhanced and businesses are empowered to become more agile and scalable in order to fulfill dynamic business demands.

How would you describe the partnership with Logicom to deliver cutting-edge products and solutions to the market?

Our partnership with Logicom is a part of the success of our Cisco projects. Actually, they have been at the forefront of providing cutting-edge products and technologies to us from the vendors, including technical information, and this has helped us provide high-quality solutions to our customers.







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BRIDGING THE INDUSTRIAL AND DIGITAL DIVIDE: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANNEL PARTNERS

As digital technologies transform many industrial platforms, channel partners need to be ready to play the role of innovative solution providers and strategic advisors for industrial customers, says Kerry Grimes, Head of Partners, AVEVA.



ndustrial and manufacturing plants and processes are increasingly becoming intelligent. While digital transformation was driving change before the pandemic, the pandemic has accelerated this trend. Supply chain disruptions, local and regional lockdowns, and a growing understanding of the benefits of remote workforces have sparked an increased appreciation of the value of digital technologies. For channel partners, it is an opportunity to address the potential of improved returns from the adoption of digital technologies within industrial businesses, referred to as the potential of Industry 4.0.

The digitalization of industrial processes requires an intermediate software layer that manages the flow of data from industrial control systems into enterprise application systems. While the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) is a recent adoption cycle emerging from the digital side, manufacturing execution systems have been the legacy backbone for data management inside industrial control systems. Increasingly the two sides are merging, and channel partners from both the industrial side and the digital side have an opportunity to bridge the gap, driving tremendous value for their customers.

Enterprises dependent on largescale plant and industrial machinery now have the opportunity to better manage their large capital investments by adding agility to asset performance management and by building the digital twins of their plants. By bringing in digital tools like big data, analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and cloud, industrial plants can be better managed in real-time. Their past, current, and future performance metrics can be presented on easy-touse dashboards carried around on executives' mobile phones or tablets.

The digital twin is a virtual replica of the plant engineering

ENTERPRISES DEPENDENT ON LARGE-SCALE PLANT & INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY NOW HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BETTER MANAGE THEIR LARGE CAPITAL **INVESTMENTS BY ADDING AGILITY TO ASSET PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT &** BY BUILDING THE **DIGITAL TWINS OF** THEIR PLANTS."

infrastructure that is enabled by data. Using 3D modeling, advanced engineering, and visualization tools, complex engineering and plant routines can be made visible and controllable on digital dashboards. Similarly, Asset Performance Management (APM), a key industrial operating tool, has also been digitally transformed. Combining big data, cloud, artificial intelligence, digital twin, augmented reality, and other similar digital technologies, APM provides a real-time dashboard for proactive decision making. Digitally managed, APM can reduce equipment failure, bring down overheads of maintenance costs, and reduce unpredictable downtime. This benefits the utilization of assets, extends equipment life, and identifies underperforming assets.

However, in the beginning, these platforms and solutions will not be interoperable. Channel partners have an opportunity to map the expectations of the plant managers, CIOs, CDOs, and CFOs who have traditionally not had visibility to this level of detail with in their operations.

Such proactive discussions by channel partners with their industrial customers can build better long-term engagement, deep and strategic relationships, benefitting the bottom line, and medium and long term cash flow of their customers.

Channel partners, therefore, need to skill themselves and build solutions for the following pain points of their customers:

- Enabling remote work: Engineering subject matter experts need to be enabled to work remotely and must have data visualization tools to monitor plant operations virtually.
- Early warning systems: Predictive analytics as an integral part of the automated asset performance management strategy will be critical to avoiding unplanned downtime.
- Younger workforce: A new generation of digital-native workers will have a shorter attention span, shorter base line of experience, and expect a highly interactive user experience through inbuilt industry best practices using AI and ML.
- Production efficiency: As supply chain interruptions create havoc, digitally integrating demand planning with plant floor operations can help build agility.
- Channel partners willing to embrace the challenge and opportunity of bridging the industrial and digital side of plant operations must be certified by their vendors. And that means training, training, and more training.

Finally, the gains for channel partners are as much about innovative solutions as about becoming a forward-looking, strategic advisor for their industrial enterprise customers.



DUSHALA

MARKETING SPECIALIST — MIDIS GROUP



My ideal morning routine would include starting the day with a cup of green tea followed by a quick morning run, prepping my daily to-do list and having a hearty breakfast with coffee whilst listening to my playlist as I get ready to conquer the day.

LESSONS FROM 2020

2020 wasn't an easy year and definitely not one that anyone could have anticipated. It taught me to be grateful for all I have, to find happiness in simple things and most importantly – to slow down and ake a moment to reflect.

FIVE THINGS I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT

- My Family
- Dhone
- Chocolate
- Music
- Coffee

THE MOST UNDERRATED TECHNOLOGY

AI, as I believe it is one the most transformative tech evolutions of our time with tremendous future potential. AI-as-a-service is an area still vastly unexplored which would enable companies of all sizes to adopt, implement and scale AI techniques into their business operations.

5 FUTURE GOALS

- Make time to read more books
- Learn a new language
- Sign up for a business course to enhance my professional skills
- Tick more destinations off my travel bucket list, once it is safe
- Actively volunteer for an NGO to contribute my bit to the society

MY LEADERSHIP STYLE IS

heading by facilitating communication - I believe meaningful communication is crucial to foster a good working relationship with your teammates. It allows others and yourself to have a clear understanding of expectations, and helps avoid misunderstandings which can eventually lead to higher efficiency.

MY BEST TIP TO BEAT STRESS

Stress is an unavoidable part of modern life but it is important to not let it get the best of you. I've learned that the art of positive affirmation – which essentially is reflecting on a positive sentence you mindfully construct with reassuring words – really helps to rid the negativity that stress brings along as tunes your brain into thinking optimistic thoughts.

MY FAVOURITE WEEKEND ACTIVITY

I am quite a foodie and while I try to maintain a balanced fitness regime during the week, I eagerly await the weekends to try different cuisines and eateries.

IN A SINGLE SENTENCE, I AM

Dynamic. The mantra I follow and abide in life is by Heraclitus - Change is the only constant. This has shaped me into a very enthusiastic and spirited person.









BANERJEE

MARKETING SPECIALIST — MIDIS GROUP



IDEAL MORNING ROUTINE

Waking up to sunlight and having a glass of detox water, followed by dedicating few minutes to reflect on the word of God. On most days, try to make it to the gym or stretch a bit. Make a to-do list, check my calendar, and plan the day. Wake up the kids, do the school rounds. And then, knowing how the day is placed, have my coffee!!

LESSONS FROM 2020

Life is uncertain! A microscopic being has brought the whole world to a standstill. Family is key - so no matter the distance, always make time to communicate. Be grateful and thankful each day and recognise that the human spirit and resilience we demonstrated

human spirit and resilience we demonstrated through 2020 will be part of history that will one day be told.

FIVE THINGS I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT

Family & friends Work Exercise Music My gadgets

(5)

THE MOST UNDERRATED TECHNOLOGY

Technology moves fast. It seems like there's a new software or tool everyone's using every day. What caught my attention recently is Progressive Web Apps (PWA).

5 FUTURE GOALS

Lead a more holistic lifestyle
Make time to pursue a hobby
Fulfil my travel roadmap, once this pandemic settles
Gain a new skill
Adding to my knowledge and experience



MY LEADERSHIP STYLE IS

Leading by example. I revel in taking the lead, but I also like to stay involved and inspire my teammates by showing that I too am working hands-on towards our goals. I find balance in relaying knowledge and helping others seek for temselves.

MY BEST TIP TO BEAT STRESS

Stress to me is like mental quicksand – the more you struggle to rid yourself of anxious feelings, the worse it gets. I try to divert my mind by taking long walks, and music always helps at the end of the day. Most importantly, in stressful moments, I look for positives in life and things which I am grateful for.



MY FAVOURITE WEEKEND ACTIVITY

Being a mum of 2 kids, my weekends are never humdrum and I am always on a lookout for Playtivities – play time activities. But so far staycations top the chart!

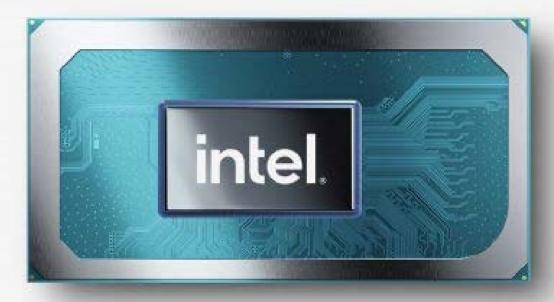


An honest and ethical person who does not believe in misleading other people and tries to be fair in everything I do.





INTEL LAUNCHES NEW 11TH GEN CORE FOR MOBILE



he new 11th Generation Intel Core H-series mobile processors (code-named "Tiger Lake-H") has launched worldwide, led by the flagship Intel Core i9-11980HK — the "World's Best Gaming Laptop Processor". The Intel Core i9-11980HK delivers the highest-performance in laptops for gaming, content creators and business professionals reaching speeds of up to 5.0 gigahertz (GHz).

"11th Gen Intel Core H-series processors take mobile gaming, content creation and commercial workstation systems to new heights. These new H-series processors are an exciting extension of our 11th Gen mobile family with double-digit single core and multi-core performance improvements, leading gameplay, direct attached storage and 20 PCIe 4.0 lanes for true enthusiast-level platform bandwidth. 11th Gen H-series is the industry's most performant mobile processor that empowers users to game, create and connect with leadership performance at any enthusiast form factor". Chris

Walker, Intel corporate vice president and general manager of the Mobile Client Platforms Group.

About Desktop-Caliber Gaming Performance on Mobile: With new 11th Gen Intel Core H-series processors, Intel leverages deep expertise in advanced processor design and PC gaming to bring the world's best gaming laptop processors to gamers around the globe.

Extending the performance momentum established by the 11th Gen Intel Core H35 series, the 11th Gen Intel H-series processors, based on 10 nanometer SuperFin process technology, feature up to 8 cores and 16 threads, with single and dual-core turbo performance up to 5.0GHz. Additionally, the central processing unit (CPU) can directly access highspeed GDDR6 memory attached to the graphics card, enabling gamers to experience higher framerates with lower latency, and load large textures faster. The mobile processor offers 2.5 times the total PCIe bandwidth to the CPU compared with the 10th Gen H-series processors, and three times the total PCIe bandwidth compared with

other industry processors.

About This Bleeding-Edge Platform: 11th Gen Intel Core H-series mobile processors empower creators and business professionals to execute tasks faster, from anywhere, thanks to best-in-class components and connectivity. With 20 lanes of PCIe Gen 4, a first for any laptop, the processor offers 4k HDR/Dolby Vision video streaming, rich configurations with fast storage, hybrid Intel Optane for high performance and capacity, 6GHz Intel Killer Wi-Fi 6E (Gig+) support, and Thunderbolt 4 with up to 40 gigabytes (GBs) per second for faster connections. New platform features also include:

- 20 PCIe Gen 4.0 lanes with Intel Rapid Storage Technology bootable in Raid 0 and up to 44 total PCIe lanes that include 24 PCIe Gen 3.0 lanes from a dedicated platform controller hub.
 - Memory support up to DDR4-3200.
- Thunderbolt 4 with transfer speeds up to 40Gbps.

Discrete Intel Killer Wi-Fi 6E (Gig+).

• Dual Embedded Display Port integrated for power optimised companion display.



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OKI's C650 delivers the performance, media handling and cost-efficiency of a class-leading workgroup device in the format of an A4 colour desktop printer. Designed for any business that has limited space, the C650 will fit comfortably in a confined area, while printing high volumes quickly and to a professional quality.

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To find out more about the small yet powerful C650 visit **www.oki.com/me**









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